

# Vaccination offers partial protection for postacute phase of COVID-19

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Vaccination against severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2

(SARS-CoV-2) offers partial protection in the postacute phase of the disease, according to a study published online May 25 in *Nature Medicine*.

Ziyad Al-Aly, M.D., from the VA Saint Louis Health Care System, and colleagues used data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs national health care databases to build a cohort of 33,940 individuals with breakthrough SARS-CoV-2 infection (BTI) and controls without evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Control groups included 4,983,491 contemporary controls, 5,785,273 historical controls, and 2,566,369 vaccinated controls.

The researchers found that compared with contemporary controls, at six months after illness, people with BTI exhibited a higher risk for [death](#) and incident postacute sequelae beyond the first 30 days of illness (hazard ratios, 1.75 and 1.50, respectively), including cardiovascular, coagulation and hematologic, gastrointestinal, kidney, [mental health](#), metabolic, musculoskeletal, and neurologic disorders. In comparisons versus the historical and vaccinated controls, the results were consistent. People with BTI had lower risks for death and incidence postacute sequelae than the 113,474 people with SARS-CoV-2 infection who were not previously vaccinated (hazard ratios, 0.66 and 0.85, respectively).

"Our results show that SARS-CoV-2 vaccination before infection only partially reduced the risk of death and postacute sequelae," the authors write. "Measures for the prevention of breakthrough infections are needed to most optimally reduce the risk of the long-term health consequences of SARS-CoV-2 infection."

**More information:** Ziyad Al-Aly et al, Long COVID after breakthrough SARS-CoV-2 infection, *Nature Medicine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1038/s41591-022-01840-0](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-022-01840-0)

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