

THE LANCET Microbe

Supplementary appendix

This appendix formed part of the original submission and has been peer reviewed. We post it as supplied by the authors.

Supplement to: Buonsenso D, Martino L, Morello R, Mariani F, Fearnley K, Valentini P. Viral persistence in children infected with SARS-CoV-2: current evidence and future research strategies. *Lancet Microbe* 2023; published online June 26. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2666-5247\(23\)00115-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2666-5247(23)00115-5).

APPENDIX

Search strategy and selection criteria

We included studies meeting the following criteria:

1. Population: children aged less than 18 years with laboratory evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection (based on SARS-CoV-2 detected on nasopharyngeal swab by RT-PCR or serology tests) or clinical suspected acute infection who underwent autopsy or organ biopsy for COVID complications (MIS-C, Long-COVID, myocarditis, intussusception, critical acute illness);
2. Study type: we excluded systematic reviews, metanalysis, commentaries, editorials and letters to the authors with no original data;
3. Outcome: to evaluate the presence and persistence of SARS-CoV-2 or parts of it in children’s (including neonates or fetuses) tissues after acute infection.

The research was limited to English language papers. A Pubmed search was conducted in January 2023. The search terms used were “pediatric, children, child, infant, young adult, adolescent, tissue isolation, autopsy finding, antigen persistence, covid, Multi-system inflammatory syndrome, mis-c, long COVID, post covid condition, post covid acute sequelae (figure 1). The search strategy is reported in appendix 1.

Data about country, sample size, age, sex, baseline severity of acute SARS-CoV-2 infection, type of complication which led to autopsy or tissue biopsy, time between the acute infection and the autopsy or biopsy, the evidence of virus or its fragments persistence are described in tables 1-2-3.

Search number	Query	Sort By	Filters	Search Details	Results	Time
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21	<p>(((((tissue) AND (isolation)) OR ((autopsy AND (finding))) OR ((antigen) AND (persistence))) AND ((((((COVID) OR (Multi-system inflammatory syndrome)) OR (mis-c) OR ((mis-c) OR (Multi-system inflammatory syndrome))) OR ((long) AND (covid))) OR (((post) AND (covid) AND (condition)) OR (((post) AND (covid) AND (acute) AND (sequelae))) AND ((((((pediatric) OR (child) OR (children) OR (infant) OR ((young) AND (adult))) OR (adolescent))</p>		<p>((("tissue s"[All Fields] OR "tissues"[MeSH Terms] OR "tissues"[All Fields] OR "tissue"[All Fields]) AND ("isolate"[All Fields] OR "isolate s"[All Fields] OR "isolated"[All Fields] OR "isolates"[All Fields] OR "isolating"[All Fields] OR "isolation and purification"[MeSH Subheading] OR ("isolation"[All Fields] AND "purification"[All Fields]) OR "isolation and purification"[All Fields] OR "isolation"[All Fields] OR "isolations"[All Fields])) OR (("autopsy"[MeSH Terms] OR "autopsy"[All Fields] OR "autopsies"[All Fields]) AND ("diagnosis"[MeSH Subheading] OR "diagnosis"[All Fields] OR "findings"[All Fields] OR "diagnosis"[MeSH Terms] OR "finds"[All Fields] OR "signs and symptoms"[MeSH Terms] OR ("signs"[All Fields] AND "symptoms"[All Fields]) OR "signs and symptoms"[All Fields] OR "finding"[All Fields])) OR (("antigen s"[All Fields] OR "antigene"[All Fields] OR "antigenes"[All Fields] OR "antigenic"[All Fields] OR "antigenically"[All Fields] OR "antigenicities"[All Fields] OR "antigenicity"[All Fields] OR "antigenized"[All Fields] OR "antigens"[MeSH Terms] OR "antigens"[All Fields] OR "antigen"[All Fields]) AND ("persist"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistant"[All Fields] OR "persisted"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistences"[All Fields] OR "persistencies"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistently"[All Fields] OR "persistents"[All Fields] OR "persister"[All Fields] OR "persisters"[All Fields] OR "persisting"[All Fields] OR "persists"[All Fields])) AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields] OR ("Multi-system"[All Fields] AND ("inflammatories"[All Fields] OR "inflammatory"[All Fields]) AND ("syndrom"[All Fields] OR "syndromal"[All Fields] OR "syndromally"[All Fields] OR "syndrome"[MeSH Terms] OR "syndrome"[All Fields] OR "syndromes"[All Fields] OR "syndrome s"[All Fields] OR "syndromic"[All Fields] OR "syndroms"[All Fields])) OR "mis-c"[All Fields] OR ("mis-c"[All Fields] OR ("Multi-system"[All Fields] AND ("inflammatories"[All Fields] OR "inflammatory"[All Fields]) AND ("syndrom"[All Fields] OR "syndromal"[All Fields] OR "syndromally"[All Fields] OR "syndrome"[MeSH Terms] OR "syndrome"[All Fields] OR "syndromes"[All Fields] OR "syndrome s"[All Fields] OR "syndromic"[All Fields] OR "syndroms"[All Fields])) OR ("long"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields])) OR ("post"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]) AND ("condition"[All Fields] OR "condition s"[All Fields] OR "conditions"[All Fields])) OR ("post"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]) AND ("acute"[All Fields] OR "acutely"[All Fields] OR "acutes"[All Fields]) AND ("complications"[MeSH Subheading] OR "complications"[All Fields] OR "sequelae"[All Fields] OR "sequela"[All Fields] OR "sequelae"[All Fields] OR "sequelas"[All Fields])) AND ("paediatrics"[All Fields] OR "pediatrics"[MeSH Terms] OR "pediatrics"[All Fields] OR "paediatric"[All Fields] OR "pediatric"[All Fields] OR ("child"[MeSH Terms] OR "child"[All Fields] OR "children"[All Fields] OR "child s"[All Fields] OR "children s"[All Fields] OR "childrens"[All Fields] OR "childs"[All Fields] OR ("child"[MeSH Terms] OR "child"[All Fields] OR "children"[All Fields] OR "child s"[All Fields] OR "children s"[All Fields] OR "childrens"[All Fields] OR "childs"[All Fields]) OR ("infant"[MeSH Terms] OR "infant"[All Fields] OR "infants"[All Fields] OR "infant s"[All Fields]) OR ("young"[All Fields] OR "youngs"[All Fields]) AND ("adult"[MeSH Terms] OR "adult"[All Fields] OR "adults"[All Fields] OR "adult s"[All Fields])) OR ("adolescences"[All Fields] OR "adolescence"[All Fields] OR "adolescent"[MeSH Terms] OR "adolescent"[All</p>	417	04:03:27
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				Fields] OR "adolescence"[All Fields] OR "adolescents"[All Fields] OR "adolescent s"[All Fields])		
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20	(((tissue) AND (isolation)) OR ((autopsy) AND (finding))) OR ((antigen) AND (persistence))		(("tissue s"[All Fields] OR "tissues"[MeSH Terms] OR "tissues"[All Fields] OR "tissue"[All Fields]) AND ("isolate"[All Fields] OR "isolate s"[All Fields] OR "isolated"[All Fields] OR "isolates"[All Fields] OR "isolating"[All Fields] OR "isolation and purification"[MeSH Subheading] OR ("isolation"[All Fields] AND "purification"[All Fields]) OR "isolation and purification"[All Fields] OR "isolation"[All Fields] OR "isolations"[All Fields])) OR (("autopsied"[All Fields] OR "autopsy"[MeSH Terms] OR "autopsy"[All Fields] OR "autopsies"[All Fields]) AND ("diagnosis"[MeSH Subheading] OR "diagnosis"[All Fields] OR "findings"[All Fields] OR "diagnosis"[MeSH Terms] OR "finds"[All Fields] OR "signs and symptoms"[MeSH Terms] OR ("signs"[All Fields] AND "symptoms"[All Fields]) OR "signs and symptoms"[All Fields] OR "finding"[All Fields])) OR (("antigen s"[All Fields] OR "antigene"[All Fields] OR "antigenes"[All Fields] OR "antigenic"[All Fields] OR "antigenically"[All Fields] OR "antigenicities"[All Fields] OR "antigenicity"[All Fields] OR "antigenized"[All Fields] OR "antigens"[MeSH Terms] OR "antigens"[All Fields] OR "antigen"[All Fields]) AND ("persist"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistant"[All Fields] OR "persisted"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistences"[All Fields] OR "persistencies"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistency"[All Fields] OR "persistent"[All Fields] OR "persistently"[All Fields] OR "persistents"[All Fields] OR "persister"[All Fields] OR "persisters"[All Fields] OR "persisting"[All Fields] OR "persists"[All Fields]))	486,656	03:59:48
19	(antigen) AND (persistence)		("antigen s"[All Fields] OR "antigene"[All Fields] OR "antigenes"[All Fields] OR "antigenic"[All Fields] OR "antigenically"[All Fields] OR "antigenicities"[All Fields] OR "antigenicity"[All Fields] OR "antigenized"[All Fields] OR "antigens"[MeSH Terms] OR "antigens"[All Fields] OR "antigen"[All Fields]) AND ("persist"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistant"[All Fields] OR "persisted"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistences"[All Fields] OR "persistencies"[All Fields] OR "persistence"[All Fields] OR "persistency"[All Fields] OR "persistent"[All Fields] OR "persistently"[All Fields] OR "persistents"[All Fields] OR "persister"[All Fields] OR "persisters"[All Fields] OR "persisting"[All Fields] OR "persists"[All Fields])	41,056	03:59:33
18	(autopsy) AND (finding)		("autopsied"[All Fields] OR "autopsy"[MeSH Terms] OR "autopsy"[All Fields] OR "autopsies"[All Fields]) AND ("diagnosis"[MeSH Subheading] OR "diagnosis"[All Fields] OR "findings"[All Fields] OR "diagnosis"[MeSH Terms] OR "finds"[All Fields] OR "signs and symptoms"[MeSH Terms] OR ("signs"[All Fields] AND "symptoms"[All Fields]) OR "signs and symptoms"[All Fields] OR "finding"[All Fields])	85,263	03:58:58

17	(tissue) AND (isolation)		("tissue s"[All Fields] OR "tissues"[MeSH Terms] OR "tissues"[All Fields] OR "tissue"[All Fields]) AND ("isolate"[All Fields] OR "isolate s"[All Fields] OR "isolated"[All Fields] OR "isolates"[All Fields] OR "isolating"[All Fields] OR "isolation and purification"[MeSH Subheading] OR ("isolation"[All Fields] AND "purification"[All Fields]) OR "isolation and purification"[All Fields] OR "isolation"[All Fields] OR "isolations"[All Fields])	363,789	03:58:41
16	((((COVID) OR (Multi-system inflammatory syndrome)) OR (mis-c)) OR ((mis-c) OR (Multi-system inflammatory syndrome))) OR ((long) AND (covid))) OR (((post) AND (covid)) AND (condition))) OR (((post) AND (covid)) AND (acute)) AND (sequelae)		"sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields] OR ("Multi-system"[All Fields] AND ("inflammatories"[All Fields] OR "inflammatory"[All Fields]) AND ("syndrom"[All Fields] OR "syndromal"[All Fields] OR "syndromally"[All Fields] OR "syndrome"[MeSH Terms] OR "syndrome"[All Fields] OR "syndromes"[All Fields] OR "syndrome s"[All Fields] OR "syndromic"[All Fields] OR "syndroms"[All Fields])) OR "mis-c"[All Fields] OR ("mis-c"[All Fields] OR ("Multi-system"[All Fields] AND ("inflammatories"[All Fields] OR "inflammatory"[All Fields]) AND ("syndrom"[All Fields] OR "syndromal"[All Fields] OR "syndromally"[All Fields] OR "syndrome"[MeSH Terms] OR "syndrome"[All Fields] OR "syndromes"[All Fields] OR "syndrome s"[All Fields] OR "syndromic"[All Fields] OR "syndroms"[All Fields]))) OR ("long"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields])) OR ("post"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]) AND ("condition"[All Fields] OR "condition s"[All Fields] OR "conditions"[All Fields])) OR ("post"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]) AND ("acute"[All Fields] OR "acutely"[All Fields] OR "acutes"[All Fields]) AND ("complications"[MeSH Subheading] OR "complications"[All Fields] OR "sequelae"[All Fields] OR "sequela"[All Fields] OR "sequelae"[All Fields] OR "sequelas"[All Fields]))	324,805	03:58:13
15	(((post) AND (covid)) AND (acute)) AND (sequelae)		"post"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]) AND ("acute"[All Fields] OR "acutely"[All Fields] OR "acutes"[All Fields]) AND ("complications"[MeSH Subheading] OR "complications"[All Fields] OR "sequelae"[All Fields] OR "sequela"[All Fields] OR "sequelae"[All Fields] OR "sequelas"[All Fields])	2,173	03:57:54

14	((post) AND (covid)) AND (condition)			"post"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]) AND ("condition"[All Fields] OR "condition s"[All Fields] OR "conditions"[All Fields])	2,322	03:57:43
13	(long) AND (covid)			"long"[All Fields] AND ("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields])	22,519	03:57:27
12	(mis-c) OR (Multi-system inflammatory syndrome)			"mis-c"[All Fields] OR ("Multi-system"[All Fields] AND ("inflammatories"[All Fields] OR "inflammatory"[All Fields]) AND ("syndrom"[All Fields] OR "syndromal"[All Fields] OR "syndromally"[All Fields] OR "syndrome"[MeSH Terms] OR "syndrome"[All Fields] OR "syndromes"[All Fields] OR "syndrome s"[All Fields] OR "syndromic"[All Fields] OR "syndroms"[All Fields]))	1,609	03:56:58
11	mis-c			"mis-c"[All Fields]	1,471	03:56:36
10	Multi-system inflammatory syndrome			"Multi-system"[All Fields] AND ("inflammatories"[All Fields] OR "inflammatory"[All Fields]) AND ("syndrom"[All Fields] OR "syndromal"[All Fields] OR "syndromally"[All Fields] OR "syndrome"[MeSH Terms] OR "syndrome"[All Fields] OR "syndromes"[All Fields] OR "syndrome s"[All Fields] OR "syndromic"[All Fields] OR "syndroms"[All Fields])	215	03:56:08
9	COVID			"sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sars cov 2"[All Fields] OR "covid"[All Fields] OR "covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covid 19"[All Fields]	324,666	03:56:01
8	(((((pediatric) OR (child)) OR (children)) OR (infant)) OR ((young) AND (adult))) OR (adolescent)			"paediatrics"[All Fields] OR "pediatrics"[MeSH Terms] OR "pediatrics"[All Fields] OR "paediatric"[All Fields] OR "pediatric"[All Fields] OR ("child"[MeSH Terms] OR "child"[All Fields] OR "children"[All Fields] OR "child s"[All Fields] OR "children s"[All Fields] OR "childrens"[All Fields] OR "childs"[All Fields]) OR ("child"[MeSH Terms] OR "child"[All Fields] OR "children"[All Fields] OR "child s"[All Fields] OR "children s"[All Fields] OR "childrens"[All Fields] OR "childs"[All Fields]) OR ("infant"[MeSH Terms] OR "infant"[All Fields] OR "infants"[All Fields] OR "infant s"[All Fields]) OR ("young"[All Fields] OR "yongs"[All Fields]) AND ("adult"[MeSH Terms] OR "adult"[All Fields] OR "adults"[All Fields] OR "adult s"[All Fields]) OR ("adolescences"[All Fields] OR "adolescence"[All Fields] OR "adolescent"[MeSH Terms] OR "adolescent"[All Fields] OR "adolescence"[All Fields] OR "adolescents"[All Fields] OR "adolescent s"[All Fields])	5,506,441	03:55:26

7	adolescent			"adolescences"[All Fields] OR "adolescence"[All Fields] OR "adolescent"[MeSH Terms] OR "adolescent"[All Fields] OR "adolescence"[All Fields] OR "adolescents"[All Fields] OR "adolescent s"[All Fields]	2,322,256	03:55:09
6	(young) AND (adult)			("young"[All Fields] OR "youngs"[All Fields]) AND ("adult"[MeSH Terms] OR "adult"[All Fields] OR "adults"[All Fields] OR "adult s"[All Fields])	1,247,293	03:54:52
5	infant			"infant"[MeSH Terms] OR "infant"[All Fields] OR "infants"[All Fields] OR "infant s"[All Fields]	1,360,644	03:54:39
4	children			"child"[MeSH Terms] OR "child"[All Fields] OR "children"[All Fields] OR "child s"[All Fields] OR "children s"[All Fields] OR "childrens"[All Fields] OR "childs"[All Fields]	3,059,324	03:54:33
3	child			"child"[MeSH Terms] OR "child"[All Fields] OR "children"[All Fields] OR "child s"[All Fields] OR "children s"[All Fields] OR "childrens"[All Fields] OR "childs"[All Fields]	3,059,324	03:54:25
2	pediatric			"paediatrics"[All Fields] OR "pediatrics"[MeSH Terms] OR "pediatrics"[All Fields] OR "paediatric"[All Fields] OR "pediatric"[All Fields]	1,160,730	03:54:17

Appendix 1 Search strategy for Pubmed.

Patient perspective

I am a 36-year-old female doctor who contracted Covid in November 2020 whilst caring for Covid positive patients in a UK hospital. Delta was the dominant variant at the time. I was subject to high viral loads given that I spent 10 hours per day for five consecutive days surrounded by infectious patients, on a ward with no ventilation, and in absence of RPE. I was unsurprised when a few days later I began to feel unwell and a PCR result returned positive. As a previously very fit and healthy young woman with no comorbidities, I naïvely expected to recover quickly.

The acute phase of the illness lasted 2 weeks and was comparable to a mild-moderate flu, with addition of diarrhoea and vomiting. Barring the onset of an urticarial rash and accompanying acute SOB which appeared on day 9 - for which I attended my local A&E department and was prescribed fexofenadine and prednisolone - the acute phase of the illness was unpleasant but expected. Week 3, barring a mild lingering fever, I mistakenly thought I had recovered and so returned to work at the start of week 4. At work I became lightheaded and breathless at rest, and so returned home believing I just needed an extended period of convalescence.

At home my condition rapidly deteriorated. I now know this to be the start of Long Covid. My heart rate and respiratory rate became acutely dysregulated. I had a resting heart rate of 140 BPM increasing to 180 BPM on standing, and respiratory rate of 18-24. Over the coming days I began to experience progressive pins and needles throughout all four limbs and violent, seizure-like, body tremors. Cyclic attacks of violent body shaking occurred daily, lasting up to 14 hours at a time - I would frequently shake throughout the entire night. Attacks were associated with an unquenchable

thirst and culminated in an urgent need to open my bowels or vomit. Motions passed were not only loose, but infective looking: dark green, almost black in colour. My sleep became disturbed. After four days and three nights without sleep, I experienced external auditory hallucinations secondary to insomnia. Exhausted but unable to sleep, I felt a mental, physical and emotional exhaustion like no other. I experienced episodes of altered consciousness and neurological sleep apnoea: my body would wake me from sleep, or from the edge of sleep, and I would gasp for air as if I had forgotten how to breathe. During this time, I also experienced a sense of impending doom. I do not doubt brainstem involvement. In the coming months I experienced - what has been diagnosed retrospectively as - limbic encephalitis. I experienced hypnagogic auditory hallucinations. Hallucinations in the form of music, bands playing, news reports, political broadcasts, were heard internally, with sounds originating from my brain. I experienced mood disturbance secondary to neuroinflammation, and vivid disturbing dreams. Intermittent episodes of immense otalgia were experienced with bouts of vertigo and hyperacusis. Pain was felt much deeper than a bacterial infection, like a rod of hot iron running through my brain; I suspected vestibular-cochlear nerve involvement and have since been diagnosed with bilateral hearing loss and bilateral tinnitus. The following month I experienced pericarditis. Undoubtedly there is a prothrombotic pan-endothelialitis. One feels a throbbing and hears blood pulsing through the head.

Patients with Long Covid often experience fatigue. We are, however, not just fatigued; our tissues our oxygen starved. I remember lifting a comb to my hair and this movement was sufficient for me to feel a large buildup of lactic acid in my arm. At 26 months I still intermittently desaturate to SaO₂ 90% and my body shows signs of abnormal circulation. Microclots have been found in the blood of long haulers, with the spike protein having been found central to this clotting process.

I do not doubt Long Covid is ultimately being driven by viral persistence. A chronic infection would explain the other pathological processes we see in Long Covid including abnormal coagulation, autoimmunity, immune system suppression and reactivation of other latent pathogens harboured in the body. An alarming growing body of evidence now shows SARSCOV2 proteins and RNA can persist in tissues and organs throughout the body - including brain, lining of the gut, lungs and pancreas - many months after the initial acute infection. Immunological markers, including persistently high levels of SARCoV2 specific T-cells in the blood of long haulers compared to those recovered, and elevated levels of IFN- γ - and TNF- α , also evidence a chronic infection.

I intermittently experience a myriad of symptoms which lead me to suspect ongoing viral persistence. Every so often I feel nonspecifically virally unwell, experience a sore throat and widespread lymphadenopathy. For the first 14 months, I intermittently passed loose; infective looking motions, evidence I believe of going viral shedding. Even now, at two years and two months, I am far from my pre-Covid health and although my brain no longer feels inflamed, it feels to be chronically infected. Indeed, a recent publication has found live replication competent virus in the brains of patients recently deceased with Covid-19 on autopsy. From the patient perspective, I don't doubt it. I suspect everyone infected has viral persistence to some degree, however, the extent and location of persistence, and the immune response to it, is likely what separates those with Long Covid from those recovered.

I have an official diagnosis of Long Covid which is essentially an umbrella term for lots of different diagnoses and common signs and symptoms. In my case, diagnoses include limbic encephalitis, bilateral hearing loss, bilateral tinnitus, pericarditis, Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS), dysautonomia and Post-Exertional Symptom Exacerbation (PESE), alternatively known as Post Exertional Malaise (PEM).

Like thousands of my colleagues, I have been unable to return to work since contracting SARSCoV2. Because I am a foundation doctor - and by UK law are required to have completed my foundation training within a requisite number of provisional registration days or else I can never practice as a doctor in the UK - I have been forced to relinquish my provisional registration. I am unsure if, or when, I will be well enough to return to foundation training, or if my place on the training programme will be kept open whilst I hopefully recover.

In the coming weeks I will learn whether I am to be redeployed to trial a phased return, working a few hours per week from home, or whether I am to be dismissed by my employer. There is currently no financial support for Doctors in the UK injured following occupational exposure to SARSCOV2. Long-term Covid related absences are now being managed under normal sickness absence policy, which means financial support for many doctors has ended, or is soon to end. Like thousands of my colleagues, I have lost my health, my independence, my ability to work as a doctor and my ability to earn. I have been left financially destitute and if not for family would be homeless.