

MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS **RESEARCH SUMMARY**

TOPIC: COVID-19 CAUSING HEARING LOSS?
REPORT: MB #4847

BACKGROUND: COVID-19 symptoms can sometimes persist for months and can damage the lungs, heart and brain, which increases the risk of long-term health problems. Older people and those with serious medical conditions are the most likely to experience lingering COVID-19 symptoms. However, even young and healthy people can feel unwell for weeks to months after infection. The most common signs and symptoms that linger over time include fatigue; shortness of breath; cough; joint pain; and chest pain. Some other long-term signs and symptoms may include muscle pain or headache; fast or pounding heartbeat; loss of smell or taste; memory, concentration or sleep problems; rash or hair loss.

(Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-long-term-effects/art-20490351>)

COVID AND SUDDEN HEARING LOSS: Hearing loss could be a rare side effect of the coronavirus infection. If recognized early, treatment could reverse part of the hearing loss and stop it from becoming worse, according to doctors from University College London and the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital. "Immediate steroids are the best treatment to improve prognosis," the doctors reported. Sudden hearing loss can stem from viral infections, the flu and other causes. However, a few cases have been linked with COVID-19, and there may be more that have been unreported. When infecting the body, the coronavirus attacks certain types of cells in the lungs and blood. The virus has been found in similar cells in the middle ear. It can cause an overwhelming inflammatory response in the body and an increase in the chemicals that can lead to hearing loss.

(Source: <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20201015/sudden-hearing-loss-linked-to-covid-19>)

STUDY SHOWS NO DAMAGE TO HEARING: A study out of Tel Aviv University (TAU), in collaboration with the Galilee Medical Center, did not link damage to the auditory system as a result of COVID-19 infection. The question remains as to whether it is a temporary symptom caused by fluids clogging the middle ear, as often happens with a common cold. The study included eight asymptomatic individuals who had tested positive for COVID-19 and eight healthy volunteers who served as a control group, none of whom reported any previous hearing loss. "Our study explored whether COVID-19 can cause permanent neural or sensory damage to the hearing system. We found no evidence for such damage," says co-author Dr. Amiel Dror of the Galilee Medical Center and the Azrieli Faculty of Medicine at Bar-Ilan University. The researchers are currently conducting a much more comprehensive study with hundreds of patients, including persons who had been severely ill and even ventilated.

(Source: <https://www.news-medical.net/news/20201215/Study-shows-COVID-19-infection-does-not-damage-the-auditory-system.aspx>)

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If this story or any other Ivanhoe story has impacted your life or prompted you or someone you know to seek or change treatments, please let us know by contacting Marjorie Bekaert Thomas at mthomas@ivanhoe.com