



FIRST INSIGHT INTO THE COMPLEXITY OF POST-COVID RECOVERY - A SINGLE CENTRE EXPERIENCE

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Objective:

Background: Besides the burden of acute covid care, a fraction of patients report symptoms after the period of acute covid illness which affect quality of life and prolong recovery.

Aim: To assess the profile of patients reporting to our post-covid clinic, their quality of life and frequency of persisting symptoms. Methods: Covid-19 survivors, referred (at least a month after the acute illness) from December 2020 to January 2021 to our Centre's post-covid clinic. Patients entered this study by filling out a questionnaire which also included current symptoms and standardised Post-Covid Functional Scale (PCFS) score.



Results: 112 patients were included in the study. Males predominated (62.5%; mean age 56) over females (37.5%; mean age 48). In the acute phase, 72.3% were treated as outpatients, 27.6% at the ward and 7.1% in the ICU. Most common comorbidities were hypertension (21.4%), various chronic lung diseases (22.3%) and type 2 diabetes (5.4%). Corticosteroid therapy was given in 45.5% of patients, either in the acute phase, post-covid period, or both. The most frequent post- covid complaints were exhaustion (63.4%), shortness of breath (48.2%), muscle weakness (31.3%), dry cough (34.8%) and chest pain (25.0%). Of 110 patients with known PCFS value, 27 (24.5%) reported 0, while 34 (30.9%), 31 (28.2%), 17 (15.5%), and one (0.9%) patient reported scores of 1,2,3, and 4, respectively.

Conclusion: Even though the majority of our patients were treated as outpatients in the acute phase and presumably had milder disease forms, three-quarters of them still experience impairment of life quality (PCFS >1) with pronounced respiratory symptoms months after the illness.