

From The Epoch Times

Study Finds Higher Mortality Risk for 18 Months Following COVID Infection

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COVID-19 patients have an elevated risk of death for at least 18 months after their infection, a new large-scale study suggests.

For the [study](#), published on Jan. 18 in the medical journal Cardiovascular Research, scientists identified 7,500 patients in the United Kingdom who were diagnosed with COVID-19 between March 16 to Nov. 30, 2020, before any COVID vaccines were available.

Each COVID patient was then matched with up to 10 people who didn't get COVID during the first 18 months of the outbreak of a similar health condition: age, sex, ethnicity, body mass index, cardiovascular, and other factors. Researchers also included a historical cohort from back in 2018 to rule out the deterioration in quality of health care services during the pandemic.

A total of about 160,000 participants with an average age of 66 and nearly equal numbers of men and women were involved in the study.

When compared with their uninfected counterparts, significantly more people who became infected with COVID were found to be up to 81 times more likely to die within the first three weeks of infection, and remained up to five times more likely to die up to 18 months later.

On top of that, more COVID patients also had a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease, again up to 18 months after infection.

Researchers said the negative outcomes are associated with what is known as [long COVID](#).

“The findings indicate that patients with COVID-19 should be monitored for at least a year after recovering from the acute illness to diagnose cardiovascular complications of the infection, which form part of long

COVID,” said Ian C.K. Wong, lead study author and professor at the University of Hong Kong.

The findings, according to Wong, indicate the need to continue monitoring for signs and symptoms of cardiovascular disease and related complications in COVID patients for at least a year after their recovery, especially in those who suffered severe COVID symptoms.

Researchers also said the results are consistent with those of a previous [American study](#)—the only other study so far based on such a large sample size.

In the February 2022 American study, scientists used the national healthcare databases of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to build a male-dominant cohort of 154,068 COVID patients with more than 11 million people in the control group.

The study reported that veterans who caught COVID had a 72 percent higher risk of heart failure over the year following infection than in their uninfected peers.

Overall, those infected were found to have a 63 percent higher risk of developing any of the range of 20 cardiovascular diseases over the year than those who weren't infected.