Characteristics of Patients Seeking Treatment for "Brain Fog" Secondary to Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC) in the Deep South

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Introduction:

- PASC, also known as Post-COVID or Long COVID refers to a constellation of symptoms that persist after SARS-CoV-2 infection
- Brain fog is a common symptom of PASC, described as a condition that causes "cloudy thinking" making it difficult to complete everyday activities
- To date, little has been written about the characteristics of patients who seek treatment for "Brain Fog" post-COVID

Objective:

- A descriptive study of those with persistent neuropsychiatric symptoms seeking treatment for PASC in the Deep South

Methods:

- This study examined 97 consecutive outpatients referred for neuropsychological evaluation from UAB Post-COVID Treatment Program
- Patients completed demographic, medical history, and Patient Reported Outcome (PRO) questionnaires via RedCAP prior to undergoing a full neuropsychological testing battery

Acknowledgments

This work is supported by the UAB Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute

Results:

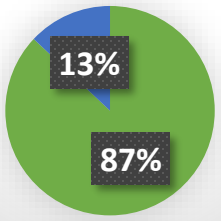
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

Demographic Category	Description
Age	49.42 (18-74)
Gender	Female (77%)
Race	Caucasian (73%) Black (25%)
Education	15.49

Table 2. Initial and persistent symptoms associated with SARS-CoV-2

Symptoms	Initial/Persistent
Headache	76%/55%
Cough	57%/17%
Shortness of Breath	56%/53%
Loss of Taste or Smell	54%/25%

87% Not Back to Baseline Health



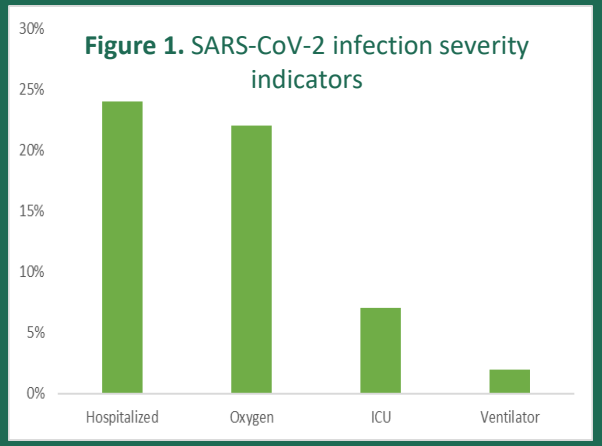


Figure 1. SARS-CoV-2 infection severity indicators

Summary:

- Those who sought treatment for neurocognitive symptoms related to PASC were commonly middle aged, White, women, with at least a high school education.
- Participants experienced primarily mild disease course of COVID-19 with headache as the most common initial symptom
- Neuropsychiatric issues were reported to impact their pre-COVID-19 functioning and ability to return to work.

Interpretation:

- Although the literature suggests that those with moderate to severe COVID-19 course have worse cognitive outcomes, those with a mild course more commonly sought treatment for "Brain Fog"
- Although the elderly and racial/ethnic minorities in the US have had higher rates of infection and poorer cognitive outcomes from COVID-19 infection, they were less likely to seek treatment in our sample

Check out our other posters and supplemental information regarding our UAB NeuroCOVID Database here: