

Case report of potential 'long COVID' in children

18 November 2020, by Gunilla Sonnebring



Children of school age. Credit: UNICEF

COVID-19 has been linked to an increased risk of death and morbidity, particularly in the elderly population and in people who belong to risk groups. The disease tends to have a milder course in children. Although it is known that a small number of children with COVID-19 develops so called multi-inflammatory syndrome (MIS-c), reports of other complications are rare. In a systematic review now published in *Acta Paediatrica*, Jonas F Ludvigsson, pediatrician at Örebro University Hospital and professor at the Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Karolinska Institutet, reviewed 179 publications that might concern long COVID in children (here defined as symptoms persistent two months after onset of COVID-19), but none of these publications actually concerned long COVID in children.

In an accompanying case report in the same article in *Acta Paediatrica*, Ludvigsson describes five [children](#) with clinical COVID-19 who had similar long-term effects to adults.

"The children were between nine and 15 years old

and four were girls. All five children had fatigue, dyspnoea, heart palpitations or [chest pain](#) and four had headaches, difficulties concentrating, muscle weakness, dizziness and sore throats," says Professor Ludvigsson.

All of the children had remaining symptoms 6-8 months after COVID-19 onset. Fatigue was the predominant symptom.

"Half a year after disease onset, some of the children had improved, but none had fully returned to school. More research is needed into the prevalence and prognosis of long COVID in children, says Professor Ludvigsson. "The healthcare needs to follow-up these children, some of these children have substantial complaints."

More information: Jonas F Ludvigsson. Case report and systematic review suggest that children may experience similar long-term effects to adults after clinical COVID-19, *Acta Paediatrica* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/apa.15673](https://doi.org/10.1111/apa.15673)

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