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Press release

Health Secretary warns of long-term effects of COVID-19 as new film released

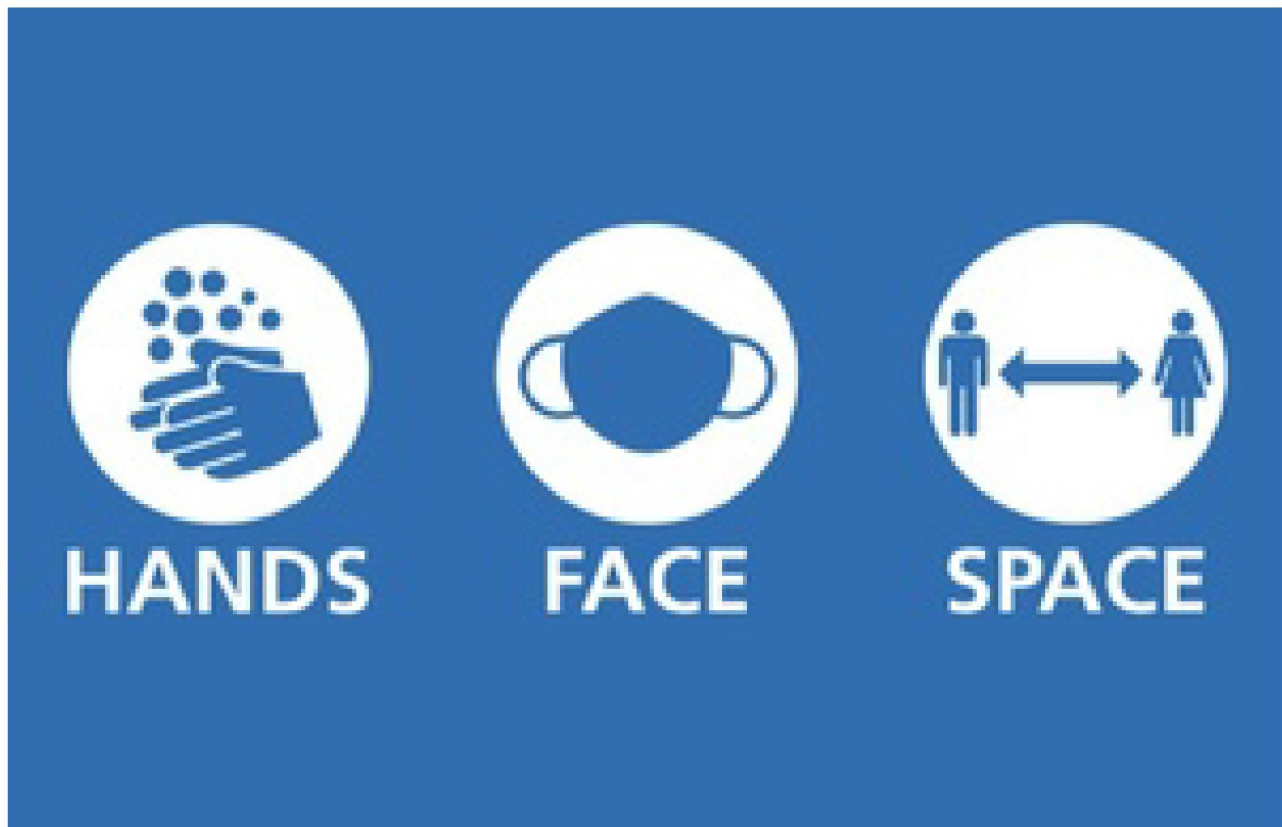
New data suggests long COVID affects around 10% of 18 to 49 year olds who become unwell with COVID-19.

From:

[Department of Health and Social Care \(/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care\)](#)

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- The Health Secretary urges people to follow the guidelines to protect themselves and others from the potentially debilitating long-term impact of COVID-19
- A new film has been released today featuring the stories of 4 people, one aged just 22, who are living with the long-term effects of the virus

The Health Secretary is urging the public – and especially young people – to follow the rules and protect themselves and others from COVID-19, as new data and a new film released today reveal the potentially devastating long-term impact of the virus.

The symptoms of 'long COVID', including fatigue, protracted loss of taste or smell, respiratory and cardiovascular symptoms and mental health problems, are described in a new film being released today as part of the wider national Hands, Face, Space campaign. The film calls on the public to continue to wash their hands, cover their face and make space to control the spread of the virus.

The emotive film features the stories of Jade, 22, Jade, 32, Tom, 32 and John, 48, who explain how their lives have been affected – weeks and months after being diagnosed with COVID-19. They discuss symptoms such as breathlessness when walking up the stairs, intermittent fevers and chest pain. The film aims to raise awareness of the long-term impact of COVID-19 as we learn more about the virus.

A new study today from King's College London, using data from the COVID Symptom Study App and ZOE, shows one in 20 people with COVID-19 are likely to have symptoms for 8 weeks or more. The study suggests long COVID affects around 10% of 18 to 49 year olds who become unwell with COVID-19.

Public Health England have found that around 10% of COVID-19 cases who were not admitted to hospital have reported symptoms lasting more than four weeks and a number of hospitalised cases reported continuing symptoms for eight or more weeks after discharge.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

“ I am acutely aware of the lasting and debilitating impact long COVID can have on people of all ages, irrespective of the seriousness of the initial symptoms. The findings from researchers at King's College London are stark and this should be a sharp reminder to the public – including to young people – that COVID-19 is indiscriminate and can have long-term and potentially devastating effects.

“ The more people take risks by meeting up in large groups or not social distancing, the more the wider population will suffer, and the more cases of long COVID we will see.

“ The powerful new film we're releasing today sheds light on the long-term impact this devastating virus has and should act as a stark reminder to us all.”

The government is committed to supporting people suffering long-term symptoms of COVID-19. The NHS recently announced £10 million to run designated long COVID clinics in every area across England where respiratory consultants,