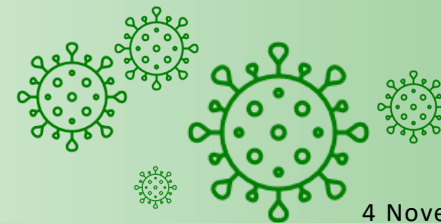




# COVID CORNER

Exploring the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on our lives



4 November 2022

## Disability Awareness Month

### Equal rights for all

South Africa observes National Disability Rights Awareness Month every year between 3 November and 3 December. This year, the theme is “Not all disabilities are visible.”

Disability Awareness Month highlights disability issues and supports the dignity, rights and well-being of people with disabilities.

### The impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities

The global COVID-19 crisis has deepened pre-existing inequalities and exposed how people with disabilities are excluded from health care, education, employment etc. People with disabilities—one billion people—are among the hardest hit in terms of COVID-19 fatalities.

### Long-COVID as a disability

Long-COVID is a range of new or ongoing symptoms that can last months after infection, and which can result in both physical and mental impairment, substantially limiting a person’s ability to work. As many as 10%-30% of COVID-19 patients may develop Long-COVID.

### Long-COVID in South Africa

While there is little data available in South Africa, both the UK and USA are reporting the highest rate of long-term sickness in the workforce since 2005. Unfortunately there is currently no internationally accepted definition for “Long-COVID”, making diagnosis of disability difficult.

While there are not yet any specific obligations regarding Long-COVID for South African employers, if a person’s ability to work and lead a normal life is severely impacted by Long-COVID, certain instances may be considered a disability for the purposes of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 and the Code of Good Practice on the Employment of People with Disabilities.

### Managing Long-COVID

Long-COVID is treated by slow rehabilitation and management of symptoms. The NICD website provides some advice and home management strategies to improve overall wellbeing and manage the symptoms. If you suspect you have Long-COVID, you may need to negotiate with your employer for support for your symptoms.



NOVEMBER 03 - DECEMBER 03  
**DISABILITY RIGHTS**  
AWARENESS MONTH

## Fast Facts

- 3 November to 3 December is National Disability Rights Awareness Month
- There are one billion people living with disabilities around the world
- In certain instances, Long-COVID may be diagnosed as a disability under the Employment Equity Act (1998)
- If you have Long-COVID and it is limiting your ability to work, speak with your employer about support for your symptoms

Want to find out more?

### International Day of Persons with Disabilities:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-of-persons-with-disabilities/background>

### Long-COVID in the South African workplace:

<https://hsfnotes.com/africa/2021/09/10/incapacity-due-to-ill-health-how-to-manage-long-covid-in-the-workplace/>

### Long-COVID home-management advice:

<https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/disease-index-covid-19/long-covid/>

## Ask Dr M

### Do you still have questions?

Call us on

**0800 24 36 72**

or WhatsApp

**082 735 4472**



Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 with the two Vs:



Vaccination



Ventilation

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