



World Health  
Organization

Thailand

**COVID-19 is still here,  
this is what we know..**

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# COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective in preventing severe hospitalization and deaths.



- More than **13 billion doses** of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered globally since 2021, with careful monitoring of side effects
- The dominant COVID-19 strain in Thailand and most other countries is known as **JN.1**
- In 2021 alone, COVID-19 vaccines **saved an estimated 14.4 million lives worldwide**
- **Severe reactions to COVID-19 vaccines are extremely rare**

# Experiencing mild side effects after being vaccinated against COVID-19 is normal

**Mild side effects usually go away on their own within a few days**

- A sore arm
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Head or muscle ache
- Diarrhoea





# What do we know about Long COVID syndrome

Some people diagnosed with COVID-19 go on to develop Long COVID, symptoms include:

- Fatigue
- Breathlessness
- Cognitive dysfunction or 'brain fog'

Risks of Long COVID are usually found among:

- Female
- Older age
- Overweight or obese
- Smoker
- Pre-existing medical condition
- Severe infection that include hospitalization and ICU admission

Data suggests:

- About **6% of people** with symptomatic COVID-19 infection develop Long COVID
- Of these, **15% continue to have symptoms** at 12 months after infection, most will **fully recover**
- While less common, **children and adolescents** can also experience Long COVID

Recommended treatments:

- Studies have shown that vaccination provides significant protection against post COVID-19 condition
- There are **no specific drugs for Long COVID**, but proper medical management can help
- WHO recommends that patients who have COVID-19 have access to follow-up with multi-disciplinary care if they have persistent, new, or changing symptoms.



# What we don't know about Long COVID

The reason some people develop Long COVID is still unknown:

- **Several possible mechanisms**, including direct immune effects, neurological effects, modulation of inflammation, and impact on the gut microbiome, are being studied but are not yet fully understood.
- There may be multiple causes for long COVID, and these may **differ from patient to patient**.
- While there are **treatments for specific symptoms**, a targeted drug for long COVID as a whole has not been identified.

**WHO strongly encourages research on this topic and guidance will be updated as we learn more.**



# Are there countries where more people are dying now than before the COVID pandemic started?

### Current Situation:

- Most countries experienced a rise in deaths above expected (**pre-COVID**) levels during the COVID pandemic.
- In some countries, this increased level of deaths (or so called '**excess all-cause mortality**') has continued even as the numbers of COVID deaths decreased.

### What we know:

#### The excess deaths have multiple causes, including:

- Ongoing COVID-19 infections.
- The impact of healthcare systems being overwhelmed, leads to interruptions in chronic disease management and detection.

### What needs further research:

- Further analysis of data is needed to fully understand these observations, including why in some counties this excess mortality seems to be much lower, or even **non-existent**.



# What can you do to protect yourself against COVID-19?

WHO strongly recommends individuals to get vaccinated against COVID-19

- Those at **high risk of severe COVID-19** need one dose if they have not yet been vaccinated, followed by an **additional dose 6 months to 1 year later**
- People in close contact with **vulnerable individuals** should get vaccinated and practice protective measures (masks, cough etiquette, handwashing).
- Individuals unsure about needing a **booster vaccine** should consult a health professional for advice.