

Post COVID Syndrome (Long COVID) in Healthcare Workers.

Kasemsan Sarapee¹ MSc, Charuwan Manmee² PhD, Sathit Niramitmahapanya³ MD, Kriddesak Petchauy¹ LL.M

1. Cluster of Administration, Rajavithi Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand
2. Department of Research and Technology Assessment, Rajavithi Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand
3. Department of Internal Medicine, Rajavithi Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand

This study investigates long COVID in Thai healthcare workers, finding a 43.2% prevalence. Fatigue was the most common symptom. Multidisciplinary professionals and those hospitalized with acute COVID-19 faced a higher risk, emphasizing the need for targeted support.

BACKGROUND

Post-coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) syndrome is a complex systemic disease associated with substantial morbidity. Given that HCWs face an elevated risk of acute COVID-19 compared with the general population, the global burden of post-COVID-19 in HCWs is significant; however, there is limited understanding of the prevalence of post-COVID-19 in Thai HCWs.

- This study aimed to describe the long-term health consequences of HCWs with COVID-19 who have recovered and investigate the associated risk factors.

METHODS

A cross-sectional study of 500 HCWs who worked at Rajavithi Hospital who had recovered from confirmed COVID-19 (January 2021-June 2022) was conducted. Demographic data, comorbid diseases, and characteristics of acute COVID-19 were assessed. Post-COVID-19 was defined as the persistence of at least one relevant symptom after the first diagnosis of symptomatic COVID-19 for six months. The association between factors and post-COVID was analyzed using multivariable logistic regression analysis.

- This study was reviewed and approved by the ethics committee, Rajavithi hospital.

Table 1. Factors associated with post-COVID syndrome at 6 months after infection

Factors	B	Adjusted OR Exp (B)	95.0% CI		P-value
			Lower	Upper	
Physicians			Ref.		
Nurses	1.03	2.80	0.96	8.23	0.061
Multidisciplinary	1.78	5.94	2.99	11.80	<0.001*
Service workers	1.28	3.61	0.98	13.32	0.054
Hospitalization	1.50	4.50	1.33	15.25	0.016*

RESULTS

Most of the participants were female, single, and service workers. The mean age was 37.66±11.69 years. Most severity of illness is mild to moderate. Almost 15.2% are at risk of sleep apnea, as assessed by the STOP-Bang questionnaire. At six months, 43.2% of all HCWs had persistent symptoms of post-COVID. Fatigue, muscle weakness, hair loss, body pain, and shortness of breath (30.1%, 20.3%, 17.8%, 14.2%, and 12.7%), respectively, were the most common symptoms. Multidisciplinary was independently associated with post-COVID syndrome at multivariable analysis (AOR 5.94 vs. doctor, 95%CI 2.99-11.80, p<0.001). Hospitalization was associated with a higher risk of post-COVID (AOR 4.50 vs. no hospitalization, 95%CI 1.33-15.25, p=0.016).

RESULTS CONTINUED

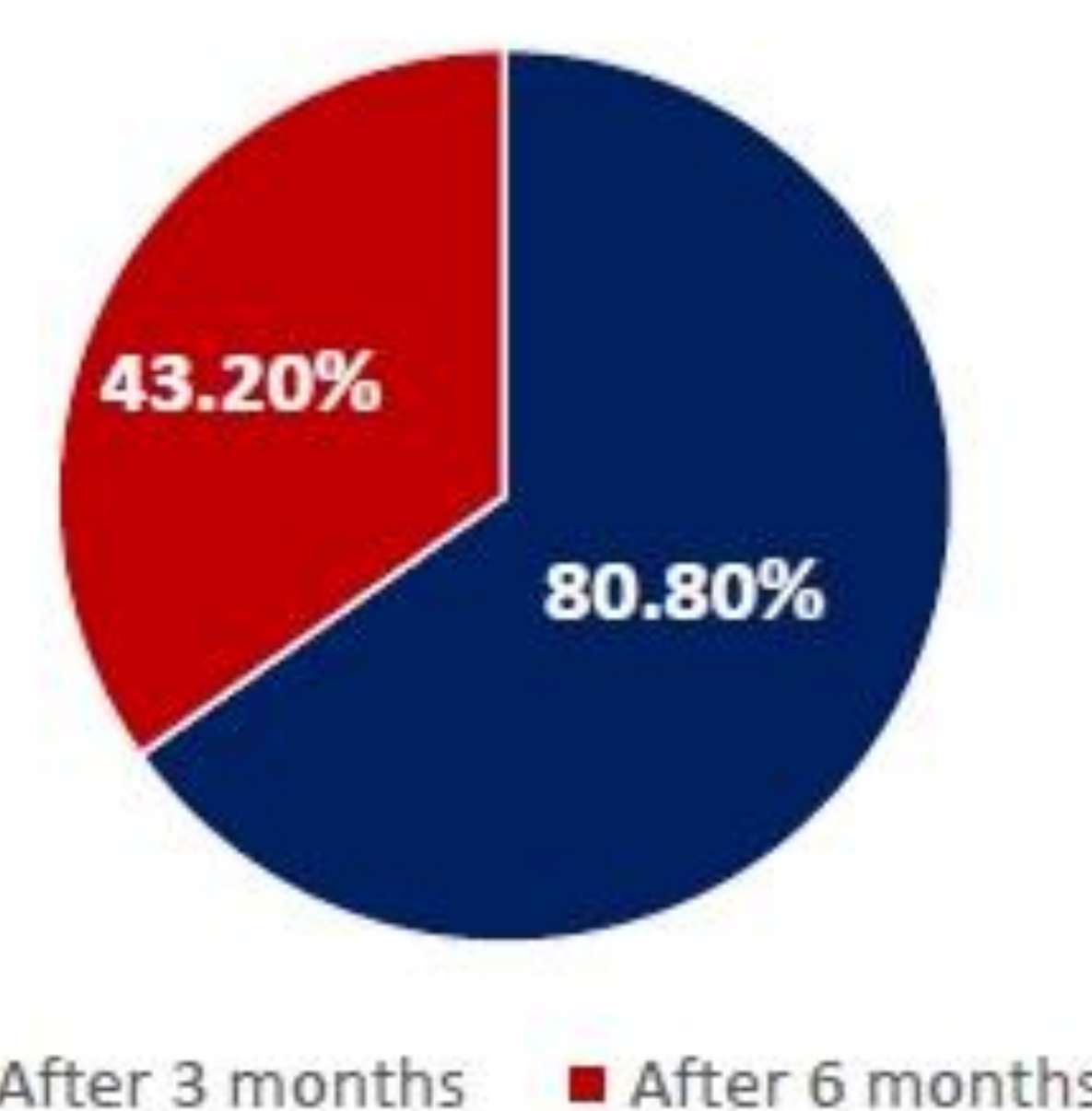


Figure 1 Prevalence of post-COVID syndrome at 3 and 6 month after infection

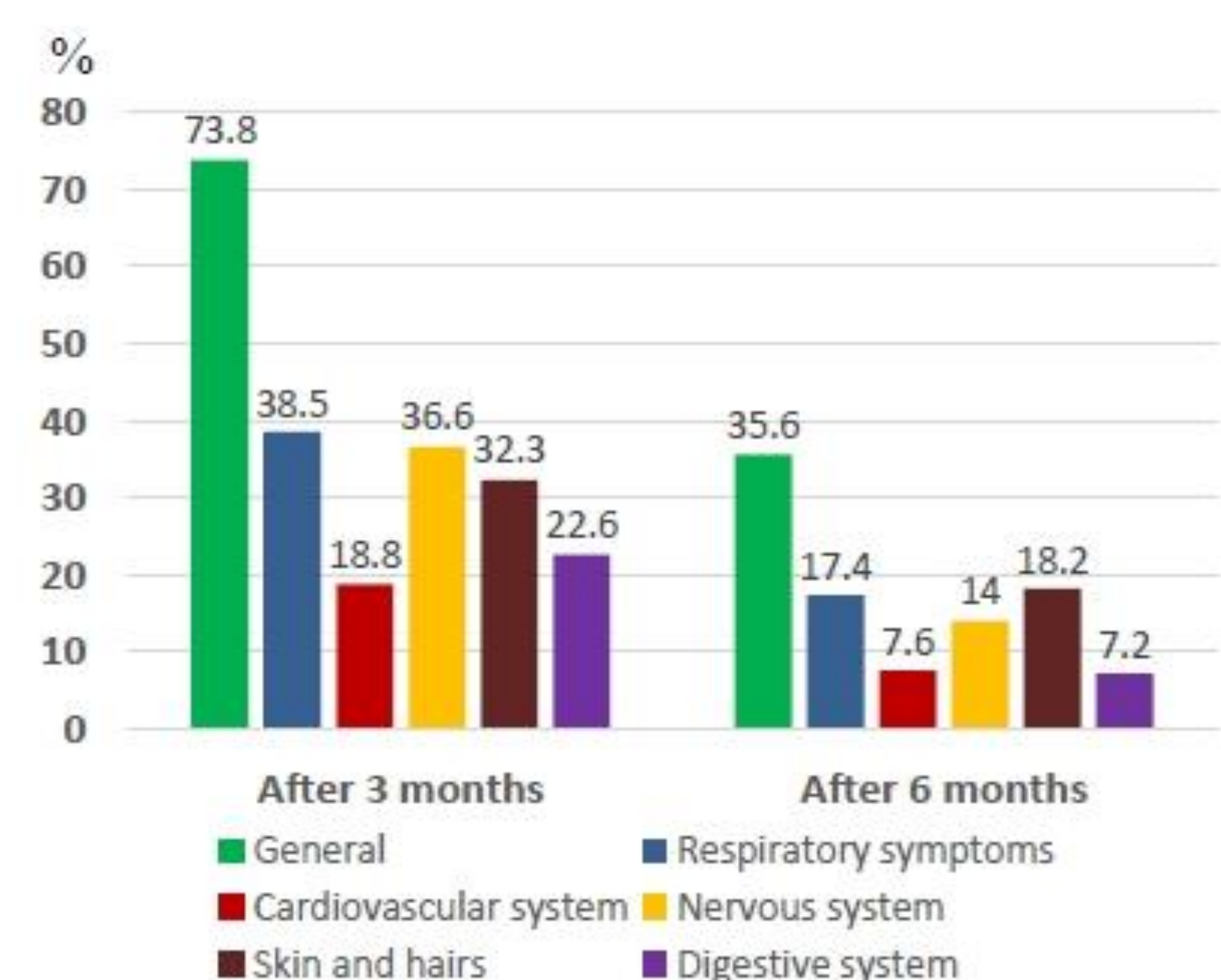


Figure 2 Prevalence of post-COVID syndrome by body system

CONCLUSIONS

The results revealed that multidisciplinary professionals and hospitalization are at risk for the post-COVID syndrome. These professions should focus on self-care even after recovering from illness and continuous COVID screening of themselves.

Acknowledgement

The study was supported by a research fund from Rajavithi Hospital and the authors wish to thank all the participants who participated into this study.

ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

Post COVID Syndrome
Long COVID
Coronavirus Disease
Healthcare workers
Rajavithi Hospital