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NIH ANNOUNCES LONG-TERM COVID STUDIES TO EXAMINE TREATMENT OF SLEEP DISORDERS AND ASSOCIATED EXERCISE INTOLERANCE

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has announced the launch of four additional long-term COVID **clinical studies** that will examine **sleep disorders, exercise intolerance, and post-effort malaise**. These studies follow six previous investigations that are part of the NIH Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery (RECOVER) initiative.

The four studies will evaluate potential management strategies for symptoms and will enroll approximately 1,660 participants. According to Walter J. Koroshetz, director of the NIH National Institute of Neurological Disorders & Stroke and coordinator of the RECOVER initiative, when people cannot sleep properly, lack exercise endurance, or feel exhausted from ordinary activities, the resulting physical and mental **distress** is associated with feelings of helplessness. He concluded that concrete solutions to help those struggling with long COVID must be urgently found and implemented.

One of the RECOVER-SLEEP studies will test two medications approved by the Food and Drug

Administration - **modafinil and solriamfetol** - to treat individuals with long COVID who have sleep-wake rhythm disorders, particularly during the day.

Furthermore, another study will test potential treatments for complex sleep disorders caused by long COVID, such as melatonin and light therapy.

The role of a personalized cardiopulmonary rehabilitation program in supporting COVID-19 patients with exercise intolerance, as well as the effect of **progressive** muscle stimulation on post-effort malaise, will also be studied.

The NIH developed the four studies following feedback analysis from the community, which included **patient representatives**.

The creation of clinical studies tailored to the needs of patients, as well as the dialogue with their representatives, represents a model of integrating feedback for the benefit of communities affected by specific health conditions.

Adapted after Lisa Schnirring, 8 May 2024



Editorial board: CS 1 Dr. Viorel Alexandrescu
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