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## LONG COVID RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC LOSS

Approximately 14% of participants in Yale University's long-term study on long COVID reported not returning to work months after infection, suggesting that the condition leads to significant **economic losses**.

The study, part of the INSPIRE project, involved 6,000 participants from eight study sites in Illinois, Connecticut, Washington, Pennsylvania, Texas, and California between 2020 and 2022.

A total of 2,939 employed participants completed surveys on health and work-related activity at recruitment and every three months for 18 months. Questions included whether they had returned to work after contracting COVID-19 and how many workdays were missed due to COVID-related symptoms.

The average participant age was 40, with 64.1% being female, 61.2% vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2 before infection, and 3.8% hospitalized due to COVID-19.

At three months post-infection, 1,732 participants (59.2%) reported no symptoms, while

282 (9.6%) reported five or more long-term symptoms.

A total of 7.2% of participants missed more than 10 workdays within three months after infection due to **COVID symptoms**, and 13.9% had not returned to work during that time.

The study concluded that having five or more long COVID symptoms three months after infection was the factor most associated with work absence.

Based on the observed rates, up to 2 million people nationwide may be unemployed due to post-COVID symptoms, highlighting the need for better management of the condition to improve quality of life after infection.

*Adapted after Stephanie Soucheray, 16 august 2024*

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