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## Long COVID Community Sets International Awareness Date for March 15th

On March 15, 2023 those who have been impacted by Long COVID will come together for the very first International Long COVID Awareness Day. This yearly observance hopes to spread information about the impacts of Long COVID around the world. Long COVID support groups and those suffering the illness around the world will unite to host special online events. There will be Twitter Spaces to support those struggling with Long COVID and educate the public about the illness. All over social media we will be posting black and white images of something that we can no longer do because of Long COVID, using hashtags: #LongCovidAwarenessDay and #LongCovid. The mission is to bring people together and increase awareness about the disease.

In January 2023, first wave Long COVID patient Angela Laffin started a grassroots movement from her couch, sending out polls to the patient community on social media to establish an awareness day, and to unite with support groups and Long COVID organizations internationally.

"Long COVID is too often left out of the discussion about the negative effects of Covid infections. This day [Long COVID Awareness Day] we act together internationally to show that the impact of Long COVID can no longer be ignored." -Tove Lundberg, chair of the [Swedish Covid Association](#)

Social media plays a major role in connecting those within the Long COVID community, as many people are too unwell to work or leave their home for more than medical appointments.

"It was really no surprise that the month of March was picked for Long COVID Awareness; many that are still suffering in the community were infected in March 2020," expressed campaign organizer Angela Laffin. "My hope is that this awareness campaign will make the impacts of Long COVID more visible to those outside our community, plus serve as a resource connection hub for both those suffering from Long COVID and also those who may not yet know that they are suffering from this disease."

Long COVID, also known as Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 (PASC), is a disabling illness with a complex list of [over 200](#) possible symptoms, affecting more than [65 million](#) people worldwide.



“In March 2022, an estimated 23 [million](#) Americans suffered from Long Covid. Today, [studies](#) suggest that number could be as high as 41 million people battling Long Covid in the United States. Yet, there’s no cure or treatment,” says filmmaker Joshua Pribanic, a Long COVID patient and founder of [LCAP](#) (Long Covid Action Project). “On March 15th we act in solidarity calling for an end to the Long COVID crisis through bi-partisan support to find a cure.”

In order to help the public take action on #LongCovidAwarenessDay, LCAP has created an [online letter](#) that when signed can be sent to all levels of the U.S. government. The letter states, “Despite incomplete data about vaccines, two recent studies from George Washington University and Harvard that looked at infections between 2020-2022 found an average of 40% prevalence of Long COVID – even in these discrete populations that had vaccine mandates. Today we don’t have enough clinics, enough funding, education, nor enough specialists to care for the rising cases of Long COVID. As a large and ever-growing community, we feel the United States is not doing enough to meet the needs of this crisis. Therefore, we, the undersigned, demand that your political office explain what steps you are taking in response to the Long COVID crisis by March 16th, 2023.”

It is unclear how long someone might suffer from Long COVID complications. To date, people have lost jobs, savings, and relationships from the complex chronic conditions Long COVID creates. While some might find a bit of relief with medications, supplements or therapies, there is no proven treatment for Long COVID.

To make matters worse, many people living with Long COVID have experienced gaslighting by doctors and loved ones. Unfortunately, most people in the general public do not understand how debilitating Long COVID can be. That’s why the March 15th campaign is so important – with education comes understanding.

The March 15th campaign will focus on overcoming a myriad of challenges facing the Long COVID community. Our goals include connecting sufferers to peer support, resources on where to find social assistance for Long COVID patients, Long COVID education programs, advocacy for clean air and prevention, and urgent funding needed for research and reliable government data.

Colors for a tricolor ribbon were also polled by the community to represent those impacted by the illness. Tracey Thompson, another first wave Long COVID patient, has designed the Long COVID awareness ribbon the community will use to represent them. The tricolor ribbon consists of gray, teal and black: gray represents the losses and sadness from pandemic, teal represents hope and support, and black represents the loneliness and rest that comes with Long COVID. Thompson has also created graphics on the awareness website that anyone may use: <https://LongCovidAwareness.Life>.

Laffin will begin petitioning to get Long COVID Awareness Day officially recognized by the United Nations. Besides uniting those living with Long COVID, we are confident that this campaign will motivate the medical community to take more action in finding a cure for this illness.