

#longcovid2022

Physiotherapy management in long COVID

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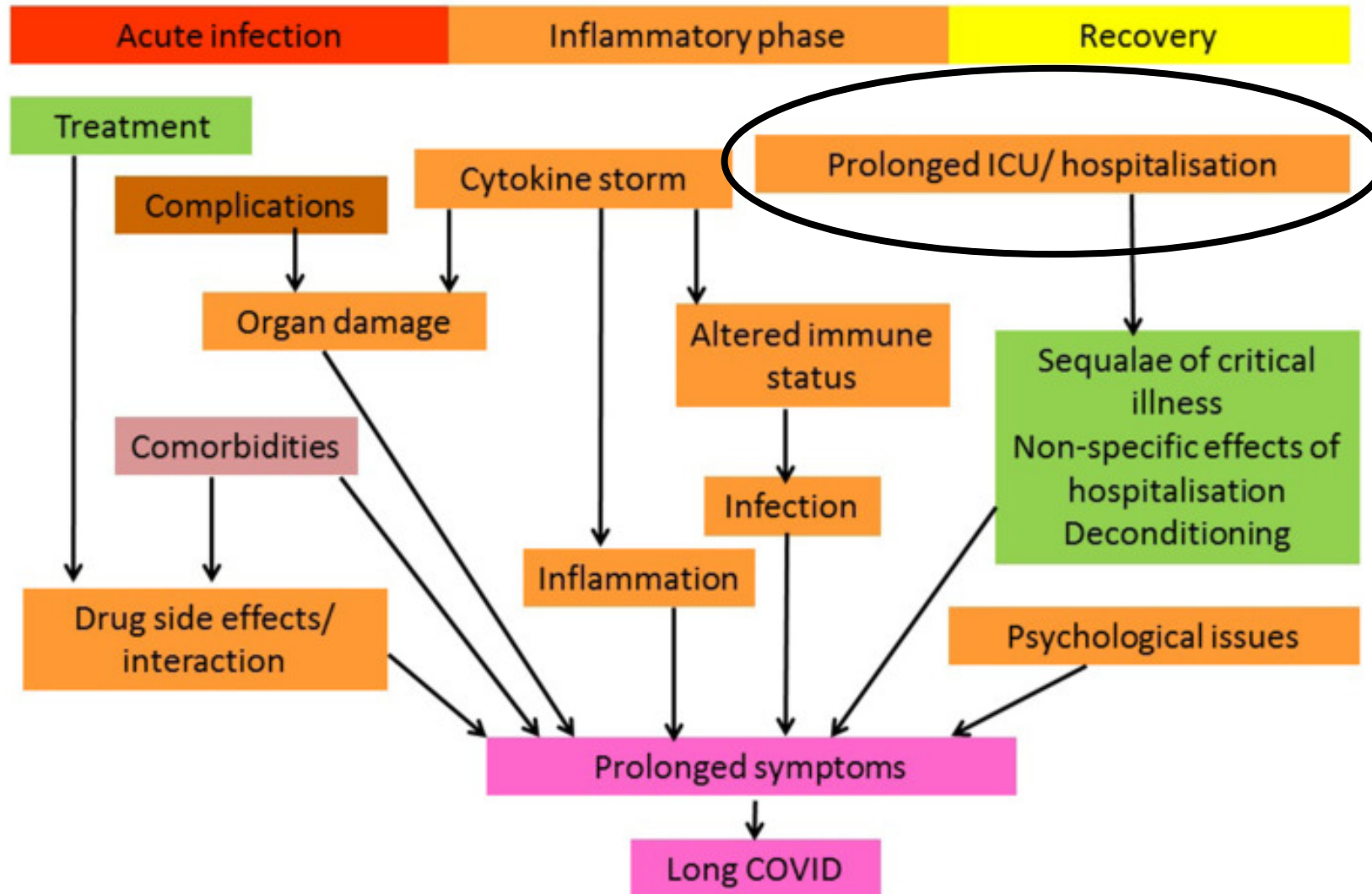
Box 2 Post-viral fatigue syndrome

Physiotherapists have been highlighting the potential for people recovering from COVID-19 to develop post-viral fatigue syndrome (PVFS). Clague-Baker, a researcher from the University of Leicester (University of Leicester, 2020), notes that based on previous research on PVFS, up to 10% of people recovering from COVID-19 could develop the syndrome (Hickie et al., 2006, Moldofsky and Patcai, 2011). Physiotherapists should be aware of the signs and symptoms of PVFS and know the management strategies which should focus on rest, hydration and nutrition. If symptoms do not resolve by four to five months this could then be diagnosed as myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME). Physiotherapists should be familiar with the signs and symptoms of ME with the main symptom being post-exertional malaise (PEM) and know the appropriate treatment strategies. They should be aware that progressive physiotherapy can be harmful as people with ME have abnormal responses to exercise including: a lower anaerobic threshold, lower oxygen capacity, increased acidosis and abnormal cardiovascular responses (Carruthers et al., 2012). Appropriate management strategies include symptom-contingent pacing and heart rate



Long COVID overview

Ref: [Long COVID: An overview - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)



Physiotherapy management in Long Covid

Fatigue management

Pacing

Planning

Prioritising

Rest is crucial

Activity and symptom diary



#stoprestpace

— Physiotherapy management in Long COVID

Return to activity/exercise

Not indicated with post exertional symptom exacerbation (PESE)

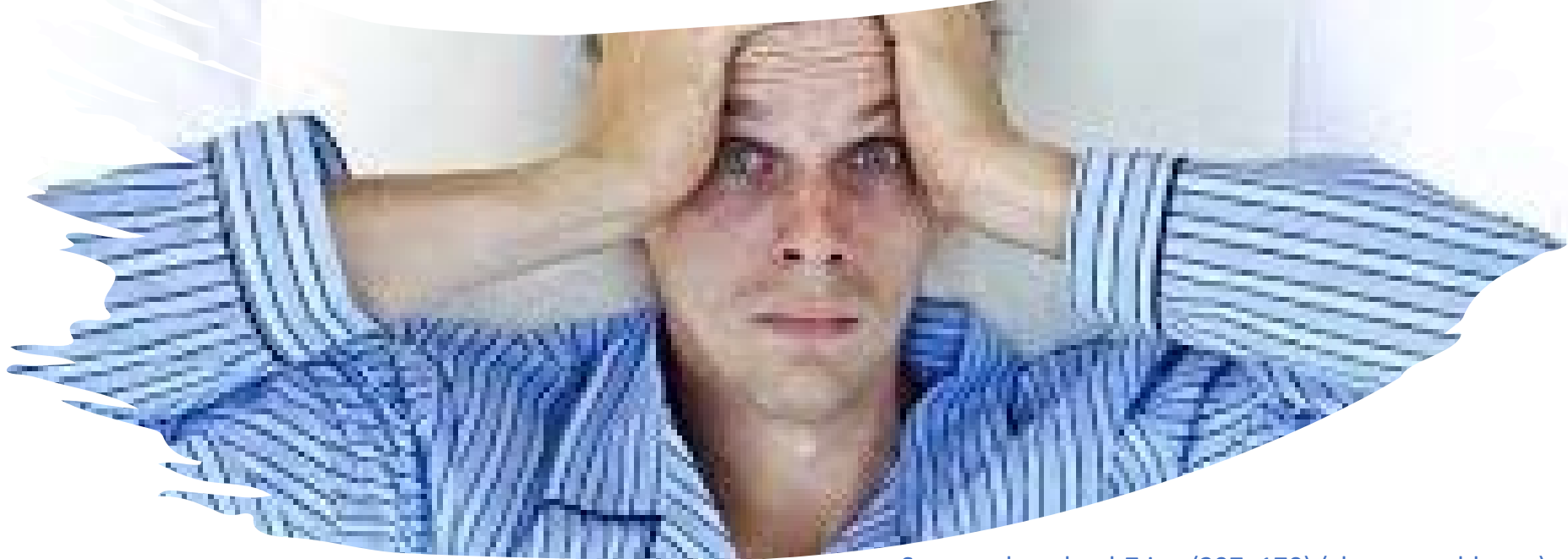
Cautious symptom-led approach

Close monitoring during activity

Monitor symptoms for up to 72 hours afterwards



Physiotherapy management in Long COVID



Source: [download-7.jpg \(297×170\) \(clamorworld.com\)](#)

Sleep Health

Create an environment conducive to sleep

Minimize stimulation

Turn off screens at least an hour before bed

Avoid alcohol, caffeine and big meals at least two hours before bed

How physiotherapy can support those with Long COVID

Fatigue management

Sleep health

Breathlessness management

Chronic cough

Breathing pattern disorders

Inspiratory muscle training

Muscle and joint pain

Return to exercise (when the time is right)



Source: [asbestosdiseasesassociated.jpg \(168x252\) \(healtheffectsofasbestos.com\)](#)

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Part of the team