

Effects of a self-management program in Post-Covid Syndrome individuals with and without ME/CFS symptoms

Antonio Sarmiento, Rachel Adodo, Diana C. Sanchez-Ramirez*

College of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada (*diana.sanchez-ramirez@umanitoba.ca)

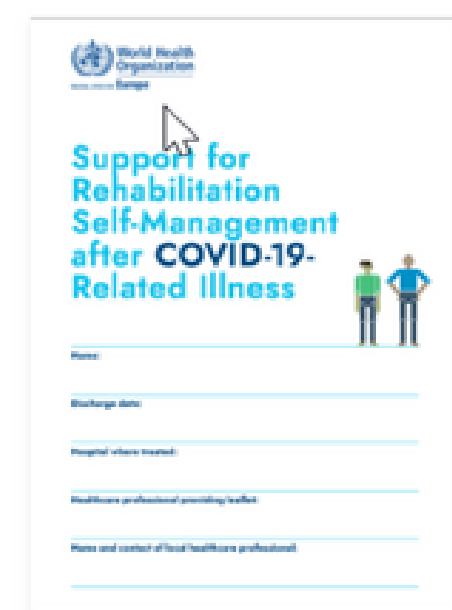
INTRODUCTION

Post-COVID-19 syndrome (PCS) affects a significant number of individuals worldwide, with some also experiencing symptoms of myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), which complicates their recovery. Self-management strategies may help alleviate symptoms and enhance functional outcomes in PCS patients.

METHOD

- Adults with PCS (symptoms ≥ 3 months) were assessed in person for fatigue (Fatigue Severity Scale), dyspnea (modified Borg scale), presence of ME/CFS symptoms (DePaul Symptom Questionnaire – short form), quality of life (EQ-5D-5L and SF-36), and exercise capacity (6-minute walking test [6MWT] and 1-minute sit-to-stand [1mSTST]).

- After assessments, the participants received personalized recommendations complemented by the WHO Rehabilitation self-management leaflet and a smart watch to monitor their physical activity levels and heart rate.



- A weekly follow-up call was given to the participants to address any questions or concerns.



- Reassessments were performed in person, and participants also rated their satisfaction and perceived impact of the program on their overall health using a Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

AIM

To investigate the effects of a 6-week home-based self-management program on individuals with PCS and compare the results between those with and without ME/CFS symptoms.

RESULTS

Descriptives (n=21)	Mean (SD)
Gender (male/female)	5/16
Age (years)	53 (13)
Time after COVID-19 (months)	13 (10)
ME/CFS symptoms (yes/no)	7/14

n=21	Pre	Post
EuroQoL (1-5)		
Mobility	1.90 (1.1)	1.80 (1.1)
Self-care	1. (0.7)	1.38 (0.7)
Usual activities	3.57 (1.2)	3.00 (1.1)
Pain/discomfort	2.05 (0.7)	2.05 (0.9)
Anxiety/Depression	2.09 (1.04)	2.00 (1.09)
Health VAS (0-100)	49.05 (22.6)	51.05 (22.6)
SF-36 (0-100)		
Vitality	18.09 (16.2)	26.09 (23.2)
Physical Function	54.04 (26.5)	50.00 (22.9)
Body Pain	58.93 (21.3)	65.9 (26.7)
General Health	38.57 (21.3)	40.47 (22.9)
Physical Role	4.76 (12.79)	11.9 (26.9)
Emotional	57.13 (47.3)	47.59 (46.6)
Social	28.57 (23.1)	36.31 (31.1)
Mental	61.14 (20.8)	36.31 (31.1)
1mSTST (number of repetitions)	21.60 (6.2)	24.40 (8.2)
1m STST (%predicted)	58.27 (19.8)	65.58 (19.8)
6MWT (meters)	443.75 (137.7)	448.07 (140.5)
6MWT (%predicted)	81.80 (27.9)	81.31 (25.8)
Bold p<0.05		

CONCLUSION

- A 6-week self-management program demonstrated improvements in exercise capacity and quality of life of individuals with PCS.
- These findings suggest that self-management may be an effective intervention for enhancing functional outcomes and overall well-being in PCS patients.

ME/CFS Symptoms



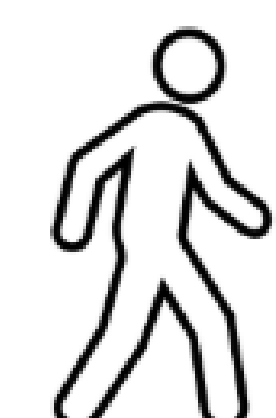
Difficulties performing usual activities



No ME/CFS Symptoms



Difficulties mobility



Satisfaction and impact of the program on overall health were 3.35 ± 0.79 and 3.15 ± 1.10, respectively.