

**TITLE:** The Social and Emotional Experiences Associated with COVID-19 Infection and Recovery: A Qualitative Study

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**STUDENT SUBMISSION:** No

**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** Policy makers, researchers, clinicians, and members of the public who have experienced a COVID-19 infection

**ABSTRACT:** COVID-19's wide-ranging effects on patients' physical health are well-documented, but less research has explored patients' emotional and social experiences during infection and recovery. We sought to understand how patients across the Providence St. Joseph Health (Providence) system experience the emotional and social aspects of COVID-19 infection and recovery over six weeks in response to open-ended journal prompts. We leveraged open-ended journal data from My COVID Diary, an app-based platform with over 15,000 enrolled participants open to patients who test positive for COVID-19 within the Providence system. Our sample was limited to participants with multiple journal entries over the first six weeks and one entry at least 72 words long (top 5%); we randomly selected 100 participants and analyzed all entries in weeks 1-6. Despite prompts' orientation towards physical symptoms, 96% of our sample talked about emotional experiences and 64% talked about social factors. The most common emotions were anxiety, isolation, depression, frustration, and gratitude. Social factors included family, work, and other social supports. Physical, emotional, and social experiences were often interconnected in complex ways. The experience of COVID-19 infection extends beyond patients' physical symptoms; a holistic understanding of the patient experience is necessary to support patient care and recovery.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Identify the emotional and social experiences of COVID-19 infection and recovery in patients' own words. Describe the ways in which emotional experiences and social factors related to COVID-19 infection and recovery influence one another.

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