

# 5

## facts about post-intensive care syndrome



### 1

#### ICU survivors and their families face ongoing challenges

The long-term effects emerging from a critical illness can include:

- cognitive, functional and psychological issues for patients living with post-intensive care syndrome (PICS)
- psychological challenges for family members, known as post-intensive care syndrome-family (PICS-F).

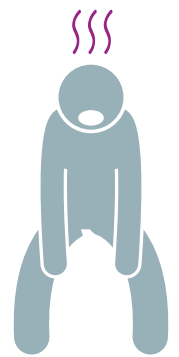


### 2

#### Symptoms of PICS involve muscle loss, weakness and high mortality

ICU-acquired weakness is prevalent among ICU survivors and can involve:

- critical illness myopathy, joint stiffness and fatigue
- muscle wasting and loss of muscle mass
- challenges with everyday tasks, which can contribute to a fear of falling and hospital readmission
- a higher mortality rate.



### 3

#### Immobility in the ICU is harmful

Effective ways to manage immobility can include:

- encouraging early mobilisation
- regular mobilisation of patients to avoid pressure sores
- nursing and allied health involvement to reduce physical restraint use for patients with challenging behaviours.



### 4

#### Surviving ICU has a significant psychological impact

PICS affects a patient's psychological function and can lead to:

- anxiety, depression and PTSD
- impaired cognitive outcomes similar to Alzheimer's-type dementia or moderate traumatic brain injury
- higher level executive function challenges
- relatives also experiencing anxiety, depression and PTSD.



### 5

#### Physiotherapists can help with follow-up for PICS patients

While there are currently no clear guidelines, continued care can include:

- peer support for survivors of critical illness
- encouraging physical activity and rehabilitation.



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