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Covid: Younger adults still at risk of serious organ damage - study

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) · 23 Jul 2021 · A6

Younger adults admitted to hospital with Covid are almost as likely to suffer from complications as those over 50 years old, a study has found.



Four in 10 of those between 19 and 49 developed problems with their kidneys, lungs or other organs while treated.

The research looked at 73,197 adults of all ages across 302 UK hospitals in the first wave of Covid in 2020.

The study, conducted by researchers at seven UK universities, the Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England, looked at the number of “complications” in those needing hospital treatment for Covid-19, defined as an organspecific medical diagnosis.

Overall, around half of all adult patients suffered a least one complication during their hospital stay. The most common was a kidney injury, followed by lung and heart damage. The highest rates were in those over 50 years old, with 51% reporting at least one problem. But they were also “very common” in younger age groups. Some 37% of 30 to 39 year olds and 44% of 40 to 49 year olds had at least one complication recorded by nurses and medical students involved in the study.

Doctors are not yet certain how a severe Covid illness can cause organ damage, but it is thought in some cases the body’s own immune system can spark an inflammatory response and injure healthy tissue.

The research showed that 13% of 19 to 29 year olds and 17% of 30 to 39 year olds hospitalised with Covid were unable to look after themselves at discharge and had to rely on friends and family.