

## Dengue survivors have 55% higher risk of heart complications than COVID patients

TOI Lifestyle Desk

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NTU Singapore scientists have found that dengue survivors are at a 55% higher risk of heart complications within a year compared to COVID survivors. The study shows increased risk.



Dengue is endemic in India and what makes it a bigger issue is that having the disease once does not give one an immunity for life like in case of Chikungunya. Caused due to the bite of an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, dengue is a serious concern for health experts, partly because of the bone breaking symptoms it has and partly because of the complication like the hemorrhagic fever which causes bleeding in the internal organs and if not managed, can even be life threatening.

But while ever since the outbreak of COVID-19 there have been incessant discussions about the repercussions of COVID on the body and a lot of research has gone into establishing the impact of long COVID on the body, very little has been said or written about what dengue can do to the body in the long run.

As per a new study, it has been found that dengue can have serious, life threatening effect on the human heart.

Scientists at NTU Singapore have found that dengue survivors have a higher chance of getting heart complications in comparison to COVID. The researchers have found that in the year following the dengue infection, the patients have a 55% higher risk of getting heart issues.

The heart complications the researchers looked into are irregular heartbeats, heart disease and blood clots. These complications are also seen in patients with COVID.

The findings of the study have been published in the Journal of Travel Medicine. For the study, a total of 11,707 individuals who had dengue were examined along with 1,248,326 individuals who had COVID between July 2021 and October 2022 in Singapore. The participants were examined for health issues up to 300 days after the infection.

## **Dengue's after effect are widespread**

Dengue can have a serious impact on the body. One significant complication is dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF), which can lead to bleeding disorders and low platelet counts, increasing the risk of bleeding and organ damage. Some individuals may experience dengue shock syndrome, characterized by severe drop in blood pressure and shock. Persistent fatigue, muscle pain, and joint pain can occur, often referred to as "post-dengue fatigue syndrome." In several cases, complications such as liver damage, myocarditis, and neurological issues may arise.

The researchers found that it is not just the heart, dengue can lead to 213% higher risk of cognition or memory disorders, and 198% increased risk of movement disorders in comparison to those who had COVID.

"This study is crucial as it provides the first comprehensive comparison of post-recovery health issues between dengue and COVID-19 patients, offering valuable insights for healthcare planning and patient management. Additionally, the findings underscore the need for increased vigilance and targeted interventions for those recovering from dengue to mitigate long-term health impacts," Professor Kwok Kin-on, infectious diseases epidemiologist at The Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care, Chinese University of Hong Kong told NTU Singapore.