

# Eat This, Not That!

COVID Symptoms That Patients Say are “The Worst”

Heather Newgen | January 27, 2022



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The COVID surge is still taking place in many parts of the country and largely because of Omicron. Dr. Michael Hirt, a Board Certified Nutrition from Harvard University and Board Certified in Internal Medicine and is with The Center for Integrative Medicine in Tarzana California explains why. "As arguably the most contagious virus in human history, Omicron has achieved this moniker by expressing 32 mutations in the spike protein array that surrounds its viral core. These spike proteins target the cell surfaces of our respiratory system and these spike proteins are also the target themselves of our immune system which can then neutralize and remove the viruses. Unfortunately, these 32 mutations have transformed Omicron in two important ways that make it much easier to catch Omicron and pass it on to others." As millions come down with COVID, doctors tell *Eat This, Not That! Health* what the worst symptoms are and signs to watch out for. Read on—and to ensure your health and the health of others, don't miss these Sure Signs You've Already Had COVID.

## 1. Lung Issues



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Dr. Yasmin Akhunji, a board-certified endocrinologist with Paloma Health says, "I've now seen many patients in the clinic a year after they originally contacted COVID-19. The lung impact and neurological impact it has as a remnant effect is terrible. With this new variant, while it is short-lived in comparison, it is highly contagious."

## 2. Brain Fog



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Dr. Akhunji explains, "Brain fog is no joking matter, and while people feel like the symptoms are short-lived, we are finding that some have long-term neurologic deficits." Brain fog can include an inability to concentrate, remember things, feel clear-headed. "Why risk it? Keep yourself and your loved ones safe."

### 3. Bad Sore Throat



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Dr. Teresa Bartlett, senior medical officer at Sedgwick explains, "The majority of people are exhibiting a severe sore throat and describe it like swallowing razor blades, stuffy nose, fever, body aches and a cough. Often the virus starts with a headache and many think they have a sinus infection. Be on the lookout for these symptoms. I have spoken to so many patients who think if they did not lose taste or smell they can't possibly have COVID but that simply is not true."

### 4. Flu-Like Symptoms



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Infectious disease expert and pioneering scientific researcher **Dr. Serhat Gumrukcu** states, "Omicron is currently the most dominant variant of COVID-19. Omicron's infection rates have been widespread across the globe. This variant has been shown to have symptoms quite similar to previous COVID variants such as headaches, fevers with chills, colds, dry coughs and body aches. However, these symptoms seem to be milder for vaccinated individuals with recovery

generally expected within 5-7 days. There have been very few cases of loss of taste and smell that have been reported with Omicron infections, unlike the Delta variant."

## 5. Why Omicron is so Contagious



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According to Dr. Hirt, "First, the Omicron spike protein mutations give the virus a much stronger electric charge which causes a 'static cling' effect, binding the virus more tightly to the lining of our nose and mouth like a dryer sheet to a wool sweater. This makes the Omicron variant more contagious, so that it takes only a few viruses to start an infection because the virus is better able to 'cling' to our respiratory lining.

Second, our immune systems use a sort of 'natural' technology (much like facial recognition) to identify bugs like viruses and bacteria. The ability of the immune system to recognize a COVID virus can be programmed either by a naturally acquired COVID infection or by the COVID vaccines. So, the next time a COVID virus tries to enter our bodies, this 'viral' recognition technology helps our immune system rapidly identify COVID and neutralize the threat.

Omicron's multitude of mutations create an effective disguise that can fool the immune system's 'viral' recognition programming. These mutations transform the physical appearance of the virus and allow it to sidestep both natural and vaccine-acquired immunity."

The CDC says: "Look for emergency warning signs\* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

\*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you."

## 6. What Else to Watch For, and How to Stay Safe



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Follow the public health fundamentals and help end this pandemic, no matter where you live—get vaccinated or boosted ASAP; if you live in an area with low vaccination rates, wear an N95 face mask, don't travel, social distance, avoid large crowds, don't go indoors with people you're not sheltering with (especially in bars), practice good hand hygiene, and to protect your life and the lives of others, don't visit any of these 35 Places You're Most Likely to Catch COVID.

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