



# PICS Fact Sheet

1 PICS is defined as new or worsening impairments in at least one of three areas following a critical illness<sup>1</sup>:

- Physical
- Psychological
- Cognitive

2 Common **physical challenges** after critical illness include ICU-acquired weakness, primarily impacting the arms and legs, trouble breathing, extreme fatigue, and problems with balance<sup>1, 2</sup>.

3 Psychologically, people with PICS are at increased risk of **depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, both related to their ICU experience and their complex recovery journey<sup>2</sup>.

4 The **cognitive impairment** experienced by people suffering with PICS is often comparable to a brain injury, impacting one's executive functioning, attention, processing speed, and memory, which can make it difficult to effectively function, both at work and at home<sup>2</sup>.

5 Many individuals living with PICS are **unable to return to work** for an extended period, often leading to financial impacts<sup>3</sup>.

6 PICS frequently presents new **challenges with driving**, which can lead to increased social isolation and feelings of loneliness<sup>4</sup>.

7 Post-Intensive Care Syndrome (PICS) impacts up to 50 percent of the roughly 3.5 million survivors of critical illness each year in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

8 Between 50-80 percent of those who receive mechanical ventilation in the ICU experience delirium, which is the most significant risk factor for PICS<sup>5, 2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Davidson JE, Hopkins RO, Louis D, Iwashyna TJ. SCCM: Post-intensive care syndrome. Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM). 2013. Accessed July 16, 2024. <https://www.sccm.org/MyICUCare/THRIVE/Post-intensive-Care-Syndrome>.

<sup>2</sup> Wright, N. PICS: Post-intensive care syndrome. Critical Illness, Brain Dysfunction, and Survivorship (CIBS) Center. Accessed July 16, 2024. <https://www.icudelirium.org/patients-and-families/pics>.

<sup>3</sup> Kamdar BB, Suri R, Suchyta MR, et al. Return to work after critical illness: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Thorax. 2020;75(1):17-27. doi:10.1136/thoraxjnl-2019-213803.

<sup>4</sup> Mart, M, Van, J, Davidson, M, Ely, E, Jackson, J. Self-Reported Driving Behaviors and Outcomes in Survivors of Critical Illness: A Survey and Analysis. Post-ICU Survivorship. American Thoracic Society. May 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Sadaf F, Saqib M, Iftikhar M, Ahmad A. Prevalence and Risk Factors of Delirium in Patients Admitted to Intensive Care Units: A Multicentric Cross-Sectional Study. Cureus. 2023;15(9):e44827. Published 2023 Sep 7. doi:10.7759/cureus.44827.