

## **Heart Health Concerns Post-COVID Infection – interview transcripts**

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**Dr. Chris Sparrow, OSF HealthCare Cardiologist**

“One thing that makes COVID distinct is that it has a propensity to cause inflammation in both small and large blood vessels. And that can lead to dangerous things like heart attacks, blood clots, and in some cases can impair the blood flow to the heart muscle.”

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**Dr. Chris Sparrow, OSF HealthCare Cardiologist**

“It's very common after COVID infection to have symptoms like fatigue; palpitations, or racing, heartbeat; chest pain and shortness of breath, and often these symptoms can last for weeks to months. That can be relatively normal. In general, the things to worry about are any new symptoms or worsening symptoms. So if you're starting to feel better or you're recovering, and then you develop new, severe, or worsening chest pain, or shortness of breath, or you start to have this sensation of a rabbit or racing heartbeat, you should either call your doctor or seek attention immediately.”

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**Dr. Chris Sparrow, OSF HealthCare Cardiologist**

“In general, if you've had COVID-19 and you did not have any heart symptoms at the time of infection and have no symptoms now, no routine testing is recommended. In some cases, your physician may recommend an electrocardiogram, or an echocardiogram or ultrasound of the heart, depending on what symptoms you did experience or are experiencing now.”

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**Dr. Chris Sparrow, OSF HealthCare Cardiologist**

“COVID-19 tends to cause inflammation in the blood vessels. Coincidentally, that is part of the process that leads to atherosclerosis, which is the disease process that leads to heart attacks and strokes. So we don't know what the long term ramifications of COVID are going to be on heart conditions. However, it's important for your physician to be evaluating you on an annual basis to look for those signs of cardiovascular disease that may or may not be more common after COVID-19 infection.”