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Dear Hillary, Susan, and Shannon,

We are over 450 journalists, researchers, clinicians, and others with expertise in Long Covid, infection associated illnesses, and disability. Many of us live with Long Covid or other infection associated illnesses.

We are writing to demand a retraction of Jeff Wise's article "Long Covid Comes Into The Light" published on 3/19/23. On March 20th, your publication issued a substantial correction stating "research has identified biological changes that can occur in association with symptoms present following a COVID infection." We believe this correction and the poor way it was implemented negates the article's conclusions about Long Covid and warrants a full retraction.

The correction undermines Wise's unfounded thesis that, "Long COVID is neither as common nor as severe as initially feared." He constructs this thesis from cherry picked data, biased sourcing, and a misinformed understanding of disability prevalence using successful [SSDI claims](#). He also excludes the perspectives of credible experts with experience in treating, studying, or experiencing Long Covid and other associated conditions. Wise made many of these same errors and exercised his extreme bias in a November, 2022 *New York Magazine* article. [Numerous correction letters were sent](#). The organization of one of his sources even accused Wise of [misrepresenting information](#).

Over [10,000 papers](#) have been published about the disease in high impact science journals including, *Nature*, *Science*, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, and *Cell* — journals that cannot be so easily dismissed in drawing conclusions about Long Covid. Failing to recognize that Long Covid is a valid biomedical illness in the framing of this article is unacceptable and explains the numerous errors made by Wise and *Slate*.

Moreover, the article originally excluded important papers like this [recent review published in Nature](#) (Davis et al.) that analyzed all the research between January 2020 and June 2022 on Long Covid. It stated that Long Covid is an incredibly severe condition that affects at least 65 million people worldwide. It concluded:

"Long COVID is a multisystemic illness encompassing ME/CFS, dysautonomia, impacts on multiple organ systems, and vascular and clotting abnormalities. It has already debilitated millions of individuals worldwide, and that number is continuing to grow. On the basis of more than 2 years of research on long COVID and decades of research on conditions such as ME/CFS, a significant proportion of individuals with long COVID may have lifelong disabilities if no action is taken."

Conditions like dysautonomia and ME/CFS have no cure and can last for life, not just years as Wise states. A recent CDC report also showed that as many as [3.5k people have died of Long](#)

[Covid](#). To claim Long Covid is not prevalent or severe is incomprehensible given this evidence, the biomedical consensus on the condition, as well as the lived experience of people experiencing and/or disabled by Long Covid or other associated illnesses.

By tacking on the Davis et al. and [Frontiers](#) reviews haphazardly during Monday's correction — without adding any context for readers about the significance of these groundbreaking reviews — shows *Slate's* continued choice to platform bias rather than report accurately on the vast biomedical literature of Long Covid. Furthermore, this inclusion of Lowe's dated quote from a nearly year old op-ed that led to the corrections raises serious questions about *Slate's* editorial standards for evidence.

The article also greatly misconstrues recovery, claiming that “most of which resolve in less than a year; and second, that a very small percentage experience symptoms that last longer.” For instance, when Wise references the Israeli Health Network study, he misleads readers by failing to state the many critiques and limitations of the study. One critique published in [The BMJ](#) stated serious concerns about the methodology and interpretation” and said it “likely presents an overly optimistic view of Long Covid recovery.”

Wise also cites an Australian study that measured recovery by phone calls between January and May 2020. But as Davis et al. states, many Long Covid symptoms can take months to appear after infection making this study useless. Neglecting this well-known fact is irresponsible and shows complete ignorance of Long Covid. Davis et al. also points to a credible study in [Nature Communications](#) that found 85% of Long Covid patients who had symptoms 2 months after the initial infection reported symptoms 1 year after symptom onset. Clearly, a majority of people do not recover as quickly as Wise falsely suggests.

There are numerous other errors to point out in this article that show a clear lack of research, reporting, and fact checking but since Monday's correction already negates the article's arguments, it is in your and the public's best interest to retract the piece and apologize to the millions of people living with Long Covid, as well as the families of those who have died from it.

Readers deserve transparent and clear reporting, not disorderly misinformation. At your earliest convenience, please let us know when the article will be retracted.

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Sincerely,

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