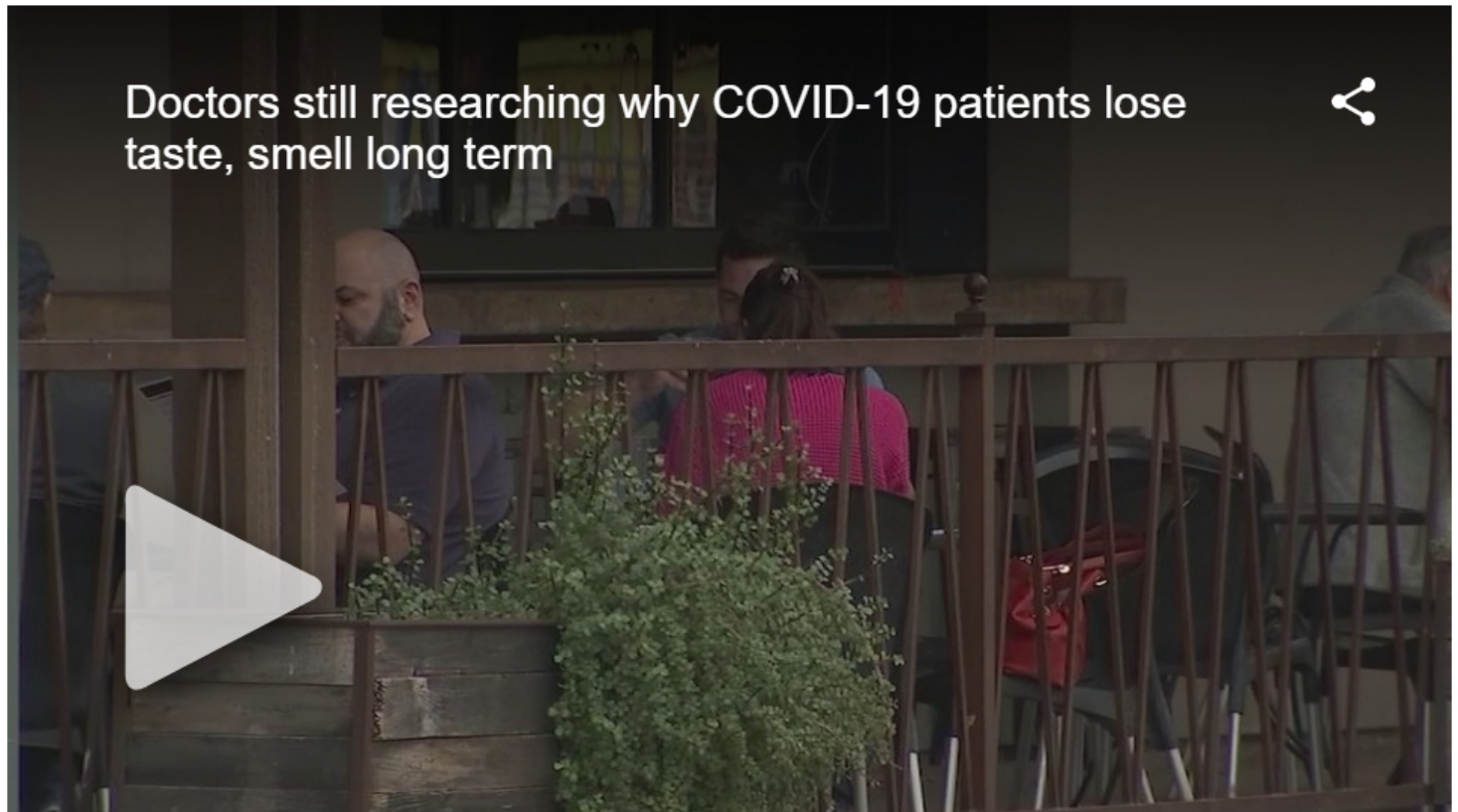


Doctors still researching why COVID-19 patients lose taste, smell long term

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Most COVID-19 patients lose their taste and smell during their illness, but some aren't getting those senses back long after they've recovered.

PHOENIX - Millions of [COVID-19](#) patients have lost their sense of smell and taste and researchers are still working to figure out if it will ever come back for some.

About a year into the pandemic, researchers know a lot more about this virus and how to solve some of the issues that come along, but the lasting loss of taste and smell is a question yet to be answered.

"Imagine not being able to smell a thing for months, it can be debilitating physically and mentally," said Dr. Ross Goldberg, President of the Arizona Medical Association.

This is an issue millions of COVID-19 survivors are dealing with.

Studies published in the National Library of Medicine show up to 80% of people who have had COVID-19 symptoms experience loss of smell and taste.

Arizona COVID-19 resources, FAQ: azdhs.gov/coronavirus

"The more extreme situations seem to not have it as much or a mild presentation of COVID, you are finding more people losing their sense of smell and taste," Goldberg explained.

The good news is that doctors say the majority of people, about 90% to 95% of people do get those senses back. However, doctors say it's not a quick process.

"The majority are getting it back within the month or two," Goldberg said.

As for the other 5% to 10% of people who have had COVID-19, researchers say they'll continue to have symptoms after six months and we still don't know if those senses will ever return.

Goldberg says, "We are trying to figure out why it's happening," adding, "Once we find what is causing it, we can get to the bottom of fixing it."