

Discussing long Covid

Published: January 13, 2026, 11:00 am

I am on the Jeremy Vine show in BBC Radio 2 at 13.00 today. Usually this means I am discussing something to do with the economy. Today that's not the case. I will be discussing long Covid.

I went into Radio 2 for the Autumn Statement three weeks ago. I have known Jeremy for more than a decade now and he was surprised I was wearing a medical grade mask. I explained my risk aversion, suggesting that as I already have long Covid I was very keen not to get another batch of Covid itself if I could avoid it.

Jeremy and his producer were both interested and concerned and realised that long Covid was an issue they had not addressed on air and so asked me if I would mind sharing my experience with them.

I am today completing my second batch of antibiotics since seeing them three weeks ago, and this episode has been worse than most, although now seems to be improving (thankfully). I am, of course, also aware that I am not as badly impacted as some, for whom it is much more disabling.

That word disabling is, however, appropriate. My body's inability to fight off a nasty sinusitis has left me operating at well below par for months now. I have been able to work, but not as much as I wanted. If I had been required to be at work for a fixed eight hour day I would, however, have found that very hard: most days I am still needing to take a rest to simply restore enough energy to keep going. Some employers would have little sympathy with that.

There are real issues here about recognising this issue, the impact it has on individuals and that some of them will need support, and that fact that maybe a quarter of the estimated 2 million sufferers seem to have withdrawn from working.

I do not pretend to be an expert. I do not have all the answers. But I do think there is a real issue here, so I agreed to talk about it.