

Covid's longhaulers, Xi's supremacy, Westminster chaos and the proof of the pudding

Our cover story this week steps back from the news agenda to explore the impact of living with long Covid. For millions of people worldwide who have survived initial infection with the virus, recovery is slow. Symptoms such as breathlessness, fatigue and loss of smell or taste persist for months and, as our science editor Ian Sample explains, treatments that work for some may not be successful for others. Through case studies and data our main feature examines how patients are facing up to the long tail of infection and how research may lead to painting a fuller picture of the aftermath of such a debilitating illness and finding treatments.

The long haul Page 33 →

This week delegates to the Chinese Communist party's 20th congress are in Beijing where they are expected to rubber stamp Xi Jinping's historic third term as leader. Our big story looks at what the president's supremacy means for the country and its closest neighbour - Taiwan - which lives in the shadow of Xi's avowed intention to bring the island back under China's tutelage. As well as analysis of the key points of Xi's opening speech, correspondent Helen Davidson reports on a rare and pointed

protest on the eve of the congress. The banners complaining about lockdowns necessitated by the country's zero-Covid policy suggest that, beyond the delegates dutifully applauding inside the Great Hall of the People, there is discontent among ordinary Chinese citizens.

The big story Page 10 →

It's been a week in Westminster like no other. Political commentators including the Guardian's Jessica Elgot have had to run to keep up with the astounding news as the prime minister, Liz Truss, ruthlessly swapped tax-cutting chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng for the more emollient Jeremy Hunt and had to watch as he ripped her government's mini-budget to shreds. Our UK news pages explain how we reached such heights of political chaos and look at Truss's chances of staying on.

Spotlight Page 22 →

The cost of living crisis has made all of us conscious about waste and economising, but can you take things too far? Feature writer Harry Wallop finds there are bargains to be had by buying out-of-date food. He bravely attempts to discover whether a diet of ageing food is feasible.

Going, going, gone off? Page 40 →

On the cover

While life has returned to normal in large parts of the world, the shadow of infection is wretched for those still suffering with symptoms. "I wanted to convey the sense of loneliness and endlessness that sufferers of long Covid feel," our illustrator says. "It was also important to communicate a sense of light at the end of the tunnel."

Illustration: Nathalie Lees

4-14	GLOBAL REPORT <i>Headlines from the last seven days</i>
10	China What Xi's grip on power means for the world
15-33	SPOTLIGHT <i>In-depth reporting and analysis</i>
15	Iran Families seek truth after the Evin prison fire
16	Analysis How youth activism rocked Tehran
18	Ukraine the terror of Putin's night missiles
25	Brazil Lula eyes comeback
28	Qatar The controversial road to the World Cup
30	US The race to save a seaside town from erosion
33-44	FEATURES <i>Long reads, interviews and essays</i>
33	Life lessons of long Covid <i>By Ian Sample</i>
40	Test before end ... can out-of-date food be delicious? <i>By Harry Wallop</i>
45-50	OPINION
45	Mohamad Bazzi US must shun Saudi Arabia
47	Sophie Ledger Europe's big wild beasts
48	Jonathan Freedland The economic Suez crisis brought on by Brexit
51-59	CULTURE <i>TV, film, music, theatre, art, architecture & more</i>
51	Archaeology Celebrating the Rosetta Stone's code crackers
55	Film Park Chan-wook turns to dark romance
57	Books Making sense of mental illness
60-61	LIFESTYLE



The Guardian Weekly
Founded in Manchester, England
4 July 1919

Vol 207 | Issue N° 17

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