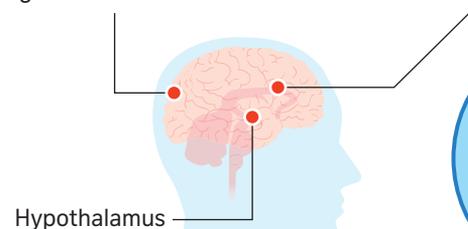


How coronavirus affects the body from top to toe

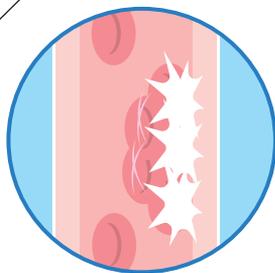
Fever

Body temperature rises to try and incapacitate heat-sensitive viruses when the hypothalamus receives signals from immune cells.

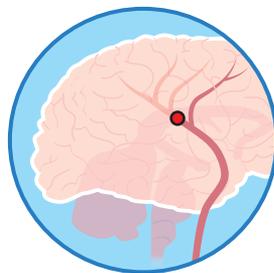


Blood clots and strokes

An accumulation of blood platelets and proteins plugs broken blood vessels (below). Once healed, these clots dissolve. If an excessive



immune response to Covid-19 causes abnormal clotting, blood vessels in the brain may be blocked, triggering a stroke (below). Symptoms depend on the region affected.

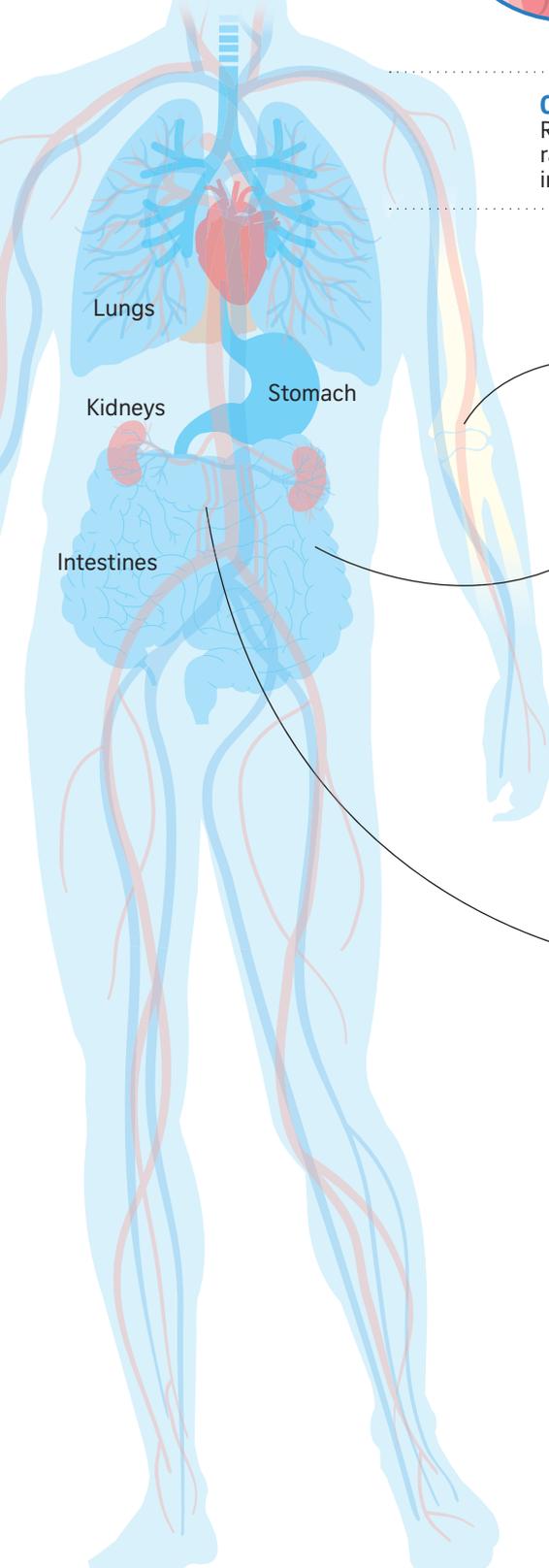


Coughing

Reflex reaction expels air rapidly from the lungs to clear irritants from airways.

Shortness of breath

As the virus reduces lung capacity, breathing becomes difficult.



Muscle and joint pain

Viral inflammation in joints and muscles (left) can cause pain and stiffness.

Post-viral fatigue

Infections often lead to long-term fatigue and weakness.

Intestinal (enteric) symptoms

Inflammation is a complex immune response intended to carry disease-fighting molecules to the site of infection and carry away debris. Excessive intestinal inflammation can cause:

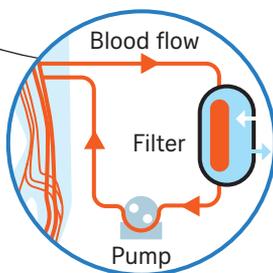
Vomiting

Reflex contraction of diaphragm and abdominal muscles empties the stomach contents via the mouth, ridding the body of toxins.

Diarrhoea

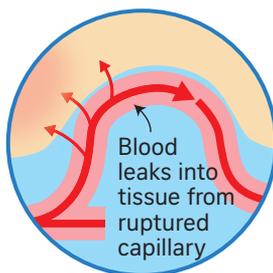
Unable to absorb fluid, the intestine's bowel movements become watery.

Abdominal pain



Kidneys

These organs filter the blood, balancing chemicals and removing waste and excess water as urine. If they fail, blood can be circulated through a dialysis machine (left), an artificial filter replicating kidney function.



Rashes, skin lesions and 'Covid toes'

When the smallest blood vessels, capillaries, become inflamed, leakage causes spots and rashes on the skin. The effect is similar to chilblains (left), which form on fingers and toes when capillaries contract in the cold then expand rapidly as they warm up - rupturing and causing irritation and swelling as blood leaks out.