



What is Long Covid?

Most people with coronavirus (COVID-19) feel better within a few days or weeks of their first symptoms and make a full recovery within 12 weeks.

For some people, symptoms can last longer. This is called long COVID or post COVID-19 syndrome. Long COVID is a fairly new condition which is still being studied.



What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms of long COVID are:

- Extreme tiredness (fatigue)
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of smell
- Muscle aches

MANAGING FATIGUE AND BREATHLESSNESS

PRACTICE PACING

Plan what you're going to do and don't over-exert yourself. Try to break tasks which feel difficult down into smaller chunks, and alternate easier and harder activities or spread them out through the day.

TRY TO KEEP MOVING BUT TAKE BREAKS

Don't stop doing things that make you feel breathless. If you stop using your muscles, they may get weaker, which can make you more breathless when you try to use your muscles. Make sure to take breaks when needed. If you use a walking stick or a frame, you can lean forward on it when you feel breathless.

To register with Bromley Well:
Freephone 0808 278 7898
Or register online:
www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct
07985 431484 / 07985 444210
or email
enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



What are the symptoms?

However, there are lots of symptoms you can have after a COVID-19 infection, including:

- Problems with your memory and concentration ("brain fog")
- Chest pain or tightness
- Difficulty sleeping (insomnia)
- Heart palpitations, dizziness
- Pins and needles, joint pain
- Depression and anxiety
- Tinnitus, earaches
- Feeling sick, diarrhoea, stomach aches, loss of appetite
- A high temperature, cough, headaches, sore throat, changes to sense of smell or taste
- Rashes

What about treatment?

Your doctor will talk to you about the care and support you might need. You may be given advice about how to manage and monitor your symptoms at home. If the symptoms are having a big impact on your life, you may be referred to a specialist service, rehabilitation service or a service that specialises in the specific symptoms you have.

These services can help manage your symptoms and help you recover.

MANAGING YOUR SYMPTOMS

SLOW AND STEADY

Try to gradually increase the amount of exercise you do. Try going for short walks or doing simple strength exercises and build up from there:

[www.bhf.org.uk/information support/heart-matters-magazine/activity/strength-exercises](http://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/activity/strength-exercises)

ASKING FOR HELP

The ME Association has information About Long Covid:

www.meassociation.org.uk/long-covid-about/

You can also call them on 0344 576 5326 for further support.

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Some myths

Myth 1: Long covid is not a 'real' condition

Not true. Long covid is a very real condition that causes a range of physical symptoms. Current tests for long covid often do not show the severity of the condition, and can leave people feeling as though they do not have 'proof' of their symptoms. As our understanding of long covid progresses, there may be better testing methods that can accurately diagnose and measure long covid symptoms.

Myth 2: You should always push yourself to do more

This is not the case. Knowing your limits and resting is essential. People can sometimes get caught in a "boom and bust cycle" where they try to do too much on days where they feel better. Afterwards, they can feel exhausted and need lots of time to recover. It is also important to know when you can push yourself to do a little more. Challenging yourself in small, manageable ways (so that you don't experience a crash in energy afterwards) can help some people to gradually increase what they can do, over time.

MANAGING YOUR SYMPTOMS

MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS

If you have mental health symptoms, such as anxiety or depression, find out [how you can access NHS mental health support services](#):

www.nhs.uk/mental-health/social-care-and-your-rights/how-to-access-mental-health-services/

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FURTHER RESOURCES

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| <u>Bromley Healthcare Post COVID Syndrome Community Pathway</u> www.bromleyhealthcare.org.uk/explore-our-services/post-covid-syndrome-community-pathway/ | This Pathway provides a comprehensive assessment where your current symptoms, abilities and main goals to maintain or progress your recovery are discussed. Contact: 0300 330 5777 |
| <u>Managing Long Covid Symptoms Video Series</u> www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CO10H34Eec | Videos produced by healthcare professionals and people with Long Covid to cover some of the main areas those with this condition suffer with and offer advice. They talk about relaxed breathing, how to boost sleep etc. |
| <u>Post-COVID syndrome (long COVID)</u> www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/post-covid-syndrome-long-covid/ | NHS England long covid pages contain information about the causes, symptoms and treatment of long covid and advice for people living with the condition. |
| <u>Long-term effects of coronavirus (long COVID) - NHS</u> www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/long-term-effects-of-coronavirus-long-covid/ | Official NHS resource providing information on the latest research into long Covid and tips and advice on managing the condition. |

References: NHS conditions www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/long-term-effects-of-covid-19-long-covid/ NHS inform www.nhsinform.scot/long-term-effects-of-covid-19-long-covid/about-long-covid/signs-and-symptoms-of-long-covid/

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