



One minute guide to...

Long COVID

What is it?

Everyone's experience of COVID-19 is different. Most people recover quickly, without any persistent symptoms or long-term problems. However, a small minority of people can have symptoms or problems that last for weeks or months after the initial infection has gone. This is sometimes called post-COVID-19 syndrome or "[long COVID](#)"

What are the symptoms?

- It is difficult to define symptoms of Long COVID because they can be different for everyone. Symptoms can come and go and also vary in severity and duration. Symptoms will not always be visible to others.
- Some of the common symptoms reported include:
 - fatigue, breathlessness, cough, loss of smell and taste, and hearing, symptoms of depression and anxiety, problems with sleep and 'brain fog' (problems with memory and loss of concentration).
- The chances of having long-term symptoms does not seem to be linked to how unwell you are when you first get COVID-19, and some will have only a mild illness initially before developing long term symptoms.

Advice for people with symptoms of LONG COVID:

- **Assess your symptoms:** The British Lung Foundation has developed a new online assessment questionnaire, [My Long COVID Needs](#), to help people with Long COVID identify their symptoms and aid conversations with healthcare professionals.
- **Seek help if you are worried:** Contact your GP if you are worried about symptoms 4 weeks or more after you had COVID-19 (or thought you may have COVID-19), especially if they are having a big impact on your wellbeing. You can be assessed and may be referred to other services.
Find information about ways to help manage symptoms: For example, [Your COVID Recovery](#) is an NHS website that can help you understand what has happened, what you might expect as part of your recovery and what support is available to you from the NHS
- **Find out about other support:** Speak to your employer if you are struggling with symptoms at work. Employment and benefits advice can also be found here: [Find help and support if you have long COVID - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **Be patient:** Most people will get better, but recovery can take some time and the process will be different for different people. Don't compare yourself to others. Doing 'too much' can make you feel worse, so keep a diary of your symptoms, activity, and stress levels to help understand what helps you feel better and what potentially makes you feel worse. Be kind to yourself.
- **Link with others:** Many people find it helps to discuss their symptoms and experiences with other people, such as family or friends. Other people have found online support groups helpful too.

This guide has been produced by Education IPC Public Health & Communities Team in Cumbria 2024



Working for Cumberland Council and
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