Ways to cope with long COVID



For most people, COVID-19 symptoms resolve within about 4 weeks. 'Long COVID' is when symptoms continue for weeks or months beyond the initial illness, and can't be explained by other health conditions.



www.healthify.nz/long-covid

Who gets long COVID?

It appears to be more common among people who had more severe initial symptoms but can affect anyone. It's less common in children and adolescents.

Some things seem to put you at greater risk:

- being older
- having more than one underlying medical condition
- having a higher body mass index (obesity)
- being female
- being admitted to hospital for COVID-19.

Why do some people get long COVID?

There's no clear answer, and more research is needed. However, it could be due to:

- the way the virus affects your body
- some of the virus staying in your body and causing ongoing symptoms
- your immune system becoming overactive as a response to the virus.

Some people with long COVID have symptoms similar to chronic fatigue syndrome.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms are highly varied and may be different from typical COVID-19 symptoms. Someone with long COVID can feel better one week and get worse the next.

Symptoms, can include:

- chest pain, palpitations
- fatigue, fever, pain, tummy problems
- headaches, sleep problems, joint pain, memory problems, dizziness
- sore throat, earache, loss of taste/smell
- breathlessness, cough.

People have also experienced anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These can come from finding out you have long COVID, being in hospital, or the ongoing illness and how it affects you mentally and socially.

How is it treated?

There's no specific treatment, so you need to learn how to manage your symptoms.

For support and management of long COVID symptoms, talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist – particularly if you develop new symptoms or if your symptoms get worse.

It's important not to rush your recovery. Make sure you get enough rest and pace yourself – plan what you need to do and don't overdo it.

Visit our website for tips on: 💒

- positions to make your breathing easier
- managing tiredness (fatigue)
- returning to physical activity and exercise.

Do vaccines lower your risk of long COVID?

The best way to prevent long COVID is to avoid the COVID-19 illness. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is the best way to prevent getting it. There's some evidence that being vaccinated reduces the risk of developing long COVID following a COVID infection.

Will I always have long COVID?

Most people make a full recovery, but the time it takes to recover varies from person to person. Monitor your symptoms and seek help if you're not improving. Ask your doctor about when to return to work and other activities.

Where can I go for support?

Your doctor can offer ongoing care, suggest support services and provide work certificates. Remember, you're not alone – there are people all around the world experiencing long COVID.

- Facebook group Long COVID Support Aotearoa
- Facebook group COVID-19 Long Haulers Support
- Twitter @LongCovidNZ
- Complex Chronic Illness
 Support Bay of Plenty

describe, it is helpful to write down information about your symptoms as you experience them, such as when they occur and what you did to manage them.					
Date and ime	What symptom(s) did you experience (eg. shortness of breath, wheezing)?	How long did the symptoms last?	How intense were the symptoms (on a scale of 1-10)?	What was the trigger for the symptom(s) (eg, exercise, stress)?	What did you do to reduce the symptoms?
lotes and o	questions to ask your healthcare p	provider:			Ø

Keep track of your symptoms

Recording your symptoms in a **symptom diary** can help you understand them, work out which ones affect you the most, and identify any changes or patterns.



