



How to manage your COVID-19 symptoms

Fever

Fever is your body's way of fighting infection and is a common symptom of COVID-19. If you have a high temperature, it can help if you get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. Drink enough so your pee is light yellow and clear. You can take [paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#) if you feel uncomfortable.

- Make sure the room temperature is comfortable (not too hot or too cold).
- If possible, open a window for fresh air but avoid draughts.
- Wear lightweight clothing and use lighter bedding.
- Use a cool cloth to wash your face, hands and neck.
- Change bed linen and clothing regularly, especially if they are wet from sweat.
- Do not use hot water bottles or electric blankets.

Headaches and body aches

Body aches due to COVID-19 can feel like a dull, aching sensation in your muscles. This sensation could affect one or several parts of your body and may range from mild to severe.

Take [paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#) to help with headaches and body aches. A bath may also be soothing.

Blocked or runny nose

Use saline nose drops or spray to help soothe or clear a stuffy nose. Medicated decongestants such as oxymetazoline (Drixine®) and xylometazoline (Otrivin®) may also be helpful but be aware that they are only for short term use. Do not use them for longer than 7 days. If you use them for longer than this, a more severe congestion of your nose can happen. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which medication will be the best for you.

Some people find steam inhalation helpful in relieving congestion but there is no scientific evidence that steam inhalation is effective for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19. In fact it may do more harm than good by burning the lining of your lungs. It can also make asthma symptoms worse.

Sore throat

Suck a teaspoon of honey, gargle with salt water, or gargle with warm water to ease a sore throat. Sucking on sugar-free lollies or lozenges also helps. You can also try using a gargle, throat spray or pain-relief (anaesthetic) lozenges.



Cough

If you have a cough, it's best to avoid lying on your back. Lie on your side or sit upright instead. You may find sucking honey or sipping a hot drink helps ease your cough. It can help to sooth the scratchiness in the back of your throat.

There are a number of [cough medicines](#) available on the market. They may be sold in combination with other medicines in cold and cough products, or as cough mixtures or cough lozenges. Cough medicine doesn't cure a cough but may give you some relief from it. There is little evidence to suggest that cough medicine is any more effective than simple home remedies and they're not suitable for everyone. If you are unsure, talk to your pharmacist.

Vomiting (being sick) or diarrhoea (runny poo)

Some people with COVID-19 may get diarrhoea (runny poo), feel sick (nausea), or be sick (vomiting). These symptoms should usually settle within a few days.

Avoid dehydration

The most important thing is to drink plenty of fluids, to avoid dehydration.

- Try sucking ice cubes or ice blocks if you are having trouble keeping fluids down.
- Drink [oral rehydration drinks](#) such as Gastrolyte® (available from pharmacies).
- Eat when you feel able to – you don't need to eat or avoid eating any specific foods. Some people find eating bland foods such as crackers, rice or dry toast helpful.

Fizzy drinks, undiluted juices, tea, coffee and sports drinks are **not** suitable because of their high sugar content. High sugar content is likely to make diarrhoea worse. Read more about [dehydration](#).

Nausea

- Eat when you feel able to – you don't need to eat or avoid eating any specific foods. Some people find eating bland foods such as crackers, rice or dry toast helpful.
- Some people find ginger helpful, taken as ginger tea, ginger-containing foods like soups, or ginger capsules.

If these symptoms are ongoing, talk to your doctor as they may recommend anti-nausea medicines.

