

Long COVID Brain Fog

Brain fog is a common issue for people recovering from COVID-19. It includes mental fatigue that causes difficulty with thinking skills.

What does brain fog look and feel like?

- Making increased mistakes
- Losing your train of thought
- Being easily distracted
- Increased confusion
- Difficulty remembering new information
- Difficulty thinking of words you want to say
- Slow processing of information
- Difficulty multi-tasking or completing tasks
- Difficulty with organization and prioritization
- Having your mind go blank

How do I manage mental fatigue?

- Balance activity with rest. Take a 20-30 second rest break every 20 minutes. When resting, close your eyes while breathing in slowly and deeply. (Don't use your rest break to scroll on an electronic device or watch TV).
- For a longer rest break, walk away from what you are doing. Then stretch or take a short nap.
- Set an alarm to remind you to rest and to remind you when to return to your previous activity.

Write things down to help with memory

- Write notes or use electronic calendars to help remember appointments and things to do.
- Set reminders and alarms on your phone, computer or clock.
- Write notes with important information and hang them at eye level.
- Use colorful paper and different colored ink to catch your attention.
- Make lists and cross off items when they are completed.

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Support your focus

- Wear headphones or earplugs in noisy environments.
- Reduce visual distractions. For example, turn off the TV, close the door and move distracting items from your workspace when completing tasks.
- Complete tasks that require increased mental effort when you feel alert and wide awake.
- Talk yourself through what you are doing by saying the steps out loud.
- Say, “No” to visitors or activities when you are tired or overstimulated.

Organize your day

- Get an overview of what you need to do first, then focus on one activity at a time.
- Develop a daily routine that supports your body:
 - Wake up and go to sleep around the same time every day.
 - Eat meals around the same time every day.
 - Incorporate movement around the same time every day.
 - Schedule times to pause every day.
- Plan increased amounts of rest for days that will be long or challenging.
- Write down your daily schedule and mark off items when completed.

Talk with your healthcare provider if you continue to experience brain fog issues after trying these techniques.