

What is “Long COVID”?

Long COVID is a wide range of health problems that people may experience for months or years after developing COVID-19. It can occur in people from all age groups, ethnicities, and cultures. Even people who had few symptoms with their initial infection are at risk for Long COVID. Persistent issues can include:

- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Memory and attention problems
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Heart palpitations or chest tightness
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sleep disorders
- Fevers
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Rash
- Joint, muscle, and nerve pains

It is estimated that 10-20% of people who had COVID-19 will experience Long COVID. These persistent symptoms can make it hard to do your usual activities, including work, school, childcare, or hobbies.

Be kind to yourself and try to remain optimistic

While it can be scary to have these persistent health problems, there is reason to be hopeful. Most people with Long COVID have gradual improvements.

You should expect to have some days that are better than others. Your progress will likely not be consistent or predictable. Try not to compare today’s results to that of yesterday, or to how you were prior to your illness, or to other people.

Want more information?

1. Centers for Disease Control information page:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html

2. RECOVER COVID Initiative, a research program led by the National Institutes of Health (NIH): recovercovid.org

