

Adapting to Long COVID

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still being felt today mentally, physically, and socially. In particular, Long COVID is a lasting effect of the virus. How can you identify Long COVID, and what can you do to support yourself if you are living with its effects?

What is Long COVID?

Long COVID describes the effects of COVID-19 that last for several weeks or months beyond the initial illness. Symptoms can fluctuate or relapse over time and research is still being done to understand the condition.

What are the symptoms of Long COVID?

The symptoms of Long COVID are:

- Fatigue
- Shortness of Breath
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Muscle Aches
- Memory Problems ("Brain Fog")

Additional symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Chest tightness or pain
- Persistent cough
- Heart palpitations
- Changes to sense of smell or taste
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Symptoms of anxiety
- Insomnia
- High temperature

How long does Long COVID last?

Unfortunately, we don't know and researchers are still learning.

What can I do to cure Long COVID?

Currently there is no definitive cure. With so many varied symptoms, the best strategy is to speak to your healthcare provider.

Long COVID sounds tricky, and it's making me anxious or depressed. How can I manage my mental health while living with Long COVID?

Symptoms of Long COVID can make it challenging to work, socialize, or sleep. If you feel like Long COVID symptoms are affecting your mental health, consider the following:

Be kind to yourself during recovery. You're not alone in navigating Long COVID. It's not all in your head.

Connect with others and open up about what you're feeling. Vulnerability about your symptoms allows loved ones the chance to support you.

Don't overload yourself. Plan your routine and balance it with activities you enjoy.

Stay active, as you can. Activity releases endorphins and adds a sense of normalcy - useful tools when challenging moments arise.

Keep a journal of your symptoms and triggers, which helps you and a health professional plan treatments and better living strategies.

Modulate intake of substances. Changing your physical or mental state may exacerbate symptoms.

Manage expectations in navigating this new illness. Your symptoms are real, even if you are testing negative.

Keep in mind that you may not get to 100%, and speak with a mental health professional if the effects are impacting your mood and mental health.

Contact CAPS for long COVID mental health support:

PAVL 120
206-296-6090
seattleu.edu/caps