

# Symptoms you may experience after COVID-19

## Information for patients and families

### Key points

- Symptoms that you may experience after COVID-19 will vary from other people, as will the severity of the symptoms
- Everyone is different, however most people recover over time
- It is important to listen to your body and look after yourself
- Some symptoms are long lasting and may require further assessment.

### Some symptoms you may experience

- Changes in mood – feeling anxious, stressed, down, lonely, isolated and guilty
- Concentration/memory
- Fatigue and tiredness
- Sleep issues
- Heart pounding/racing/going too fast/palpitations/chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Ongoing cough
- Physical exhaustion
- Loss of taste and/or smell
- Loss of strength and muscle aches.

### If you have any on-going concerns or questions, make an appointment with your GP.

Your GP can help with a referral to specialist medical clinics or rehabilitation services, such as, Pulmonary Rehabilitation, Occupational Therapy, Social Worker, Psychology, Physiotherapy, Exercise Physiology, Speech pathology or Dietitian.

### Returning to normal – what can I do?

Give yourself time to recover. Try to establish new routines, and maintain these daily to establish a new sense of normality. It is important to have a good relationship with your doctor, who could support you through your recovery.

**Mental Health and wellbeing:** To improve your mood (anxiety, stress, loneliness), ensure you spend time caring for yourself. One way to achieve this is by setting some goals for the day. Activities that may be helpful include yoga, meditation, eating well, talking with family and friends and going for a walk. Get some sunshine! Tips: <https://www.psychology.org.au/for-the-public/Psychology-topics/COVID-19-Australians> or [Beyond Blue: https://www.beyondblue.org.au/](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/)

Ph: 1300 224 636

**Concentration/memory issues/Foggy Brain:** Ensure you eat fresh, healthy food. Plan breaks during your day to reduce concentration problems. Get plenty of sleep at night. Write a list to help you remember, and work on one thing at a time.

**Fatigue/Tiredness:** This is one of the most common symptoms. Maintain regular sleep and wake times. Try to have a regular routine before bedtime. Make time to unwind and relax before going to bed. If you can't fall asleep, sit elsewhere in the house and try relaxing activities like listening to music, and return to bed when you are ready to fall asleep. Eating well and regular exercise may help with these symptoms. Tips: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/CCI/Mental-Health-Professionals/Sleep/Sleep---Information-Sheets/Sleep-Information-Sheet---04---Sleep-Hygiene.pdf>

**Heart pounding/going too fast/Palpitations/Chest pain:** Stop what you are doing and rest. It might mean you are noticing your heartbeat. If this keeps happening, talk to your GP.

**Shortness of breath:** Avoid smoking or sharing space with people who do smoke. Avoid dusty and polluted air. Discuss this with your GP. A referral into an exercise program may be helpful.

**Ongoing cough:** Try drinking plenty of warm liquids, using a humidifier or taking a steamy shower to add moisture to the air around you. Avoid smoky or dusty polluted air as this may irritate your throat. As a short-term solution, one to two teaspoons of honey taken 30 minutes before bedtime may be helpful (not for children under 12 months old). Try sitting upright which helps the air get in and out more easily. Discuss this with your GP.

**Return to exercise:** This may help improve strength, breathing, energy and mood. Increasing your activity may help you regaining control and aid your recovery. Start with small blocks of exercise such as walking (even 5 minutes) and gradually build to at least 30minutes of exercises most days of the week.

**Loss of smell/taste:** This is a common symptom. You can attempt to re-train smell and taste by trying different foods i.e. using different herbs and spices. **Safety tip:** as loss of sense of smell may interfere with your ability to detect dangers in your home. Ensure your smoke alarm is working. For more information:

[https://www.health.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0027/364446/oncol\\_taste.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/364446/oncol_taste.pdf)

If you are concerned about weight loss and/or loss of appetite:

[https://www.health.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0025/147067/oncol\\_loa.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/147067/oncol_loa.pdf)

**Return to work:** In the short term, your symptoms may impact your ability to return to work. You may need to speak with your employer to find ways around this.

**Financial stress:** You may be eligible for a Centrelink payment. If you have any concerns relating to your finances, housing, food, living in a violent relationship or other social worries, please discuss with your GP or use the following link: <https://askizzy.org.au/>

**Further Information:** [Health Direct website](#)

This information is general only.  
Northern Health encourages you to ask questions and get specific advice from your treating team.

# Northern Health



If you need an Interpreter or the support of an Aboriginal Liaison Officer, please speak to a staff member.



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