

Post Covid-19 Recovery

Information to support your
physical and mental health



This Post Covid-19 Recovery pack contains information on how to help you manage some of your ongoing physical symptoms and where to find support to manage feelings of anxiety, low mood or unpleasant memories since having Covid-19.



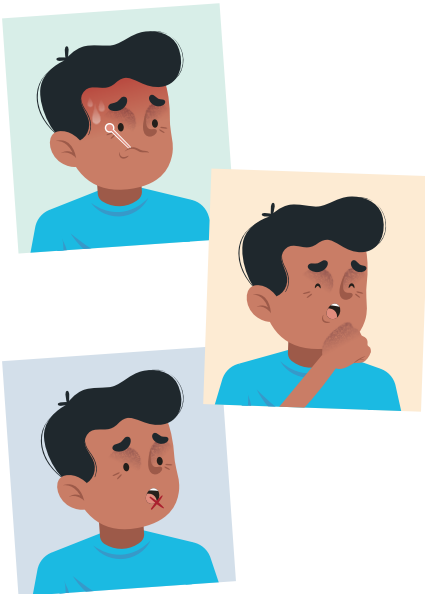
Contents

What is Covid-19 (coronavirus)?	4
How you might feel after having Covid-19	5
Advice for patients who were in intensive care (ICU)	6
What can you do to help yourself	7
Recovering emotionally	8
Resources	9
Physiotherapy	10
Occupational Therapy	16
Psychological therapy	20
Relaxation management	21
Talking Therapies IAPT	22
Dietetics	24
Speech and Language Therapy	28
Returning to work	29

What is Covid-19 (coronavirus)?

Covid-19 is a highly contagious virus that mainly attacks the lungs. It is transmitted through droplets created from sneezing and coughing from those infected and is carried in tiny droplets suspended in the air. The virus enters the body via the nose, mouth and eyes.

The severity and duration of symptoms can vary and for most people symptoms last between 7 and 14 days and can be mild.



The most commonly reported symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- Fever
- Persistent cough
- Chills or shivering
- Loss or change in smell
- Loss or change in taste
- Headache
- Fatigue or unusual tiredness
- Sore throat
- Sudden confusion especially in older people
- Skin rash
- Changes in the mouth or tongue
- Red or sore fingers or toes
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pains
- Muscle pains
- Hoarse voice
- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal pains
- Runny nose

To manage mild symptoms:

Stay hydrated Take paracetamol if you have a temperature

Rest Get up and move about at regular intervals

Some people may require hospitalisation to treat these symptoms. Monitor your symptoms regularly. If you get one of the following, please call 111 for more advice or visit the NHS 111 online service <https://111.nhs.uk/>

- Worsening shortness of breath
- A new or returning fever
- Worsening ability to concentrate
- Chest pain

For a medical emergency dial 999 immediately

How you might feel after having Covid-19

You may find your symptoms last for weeks or possibly months after your initial illness. This is sometimes referred to as 'long Covid', where symptoms may be ongoing or may come and go at different times or affect different parts of the body.

If you are not being followed up by a medical team or doctor, and if your symptoms are not improving or are becoming worse, you should seek advice from your GP or NHS 111.

Keeping a symptom diary may help you record any changes over time.

General information

Effects of Covid-19 and advice on your recovery

www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk

Information including a short video on what to expect when recovering from Covid-19

www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/covid-19-road-recovery

<https://covidpatientsupport.lthtr.nhs.uk/#/>

Advice for patients who were in intensive care (ICU)

Effects of Covid-19 and an intensive care stay on the body

Covid-19 affects everybody differently. Listed below are some of the possible consequences you may experience afterwards. For many people these problems improve over time but there may be some who need ongoing care and support.

- **Deconditioning** of the heart, lungs and muscles of the body – leading to reduced strength, endurance and ability to do everyday tasks.
- **Fatigue** is very common following Covid-19.
- **Lung related problems** which may lead to breathlessness. Some people may have scarring of their lungs.
- **Psychological effects** include low mood, anxiety, difficulties managing daily life or feeling yourself, feeling fearful or isolated, or suffering post-traumatic stress following hospitalisation.
- **Problems associated with having been in intensive care**
These can both be psychological effects such as reduced concentration and memory, depression and nightmares or physical effects such as generalised muscle weakness or problems with balance.
- **Brain fog.** Following your illness you may find it harder to think and concentrate or get confused more easily. Some patients may even have had strokes and brain injuries relating to their illness.
- **Emerging and changing symptoms** are experienced by some people in the months following the initial illness, with symptoms emerging in different systems and parts of the body, with a pattern of improvement then set-backs leading to frustration, fear and a continuing negative impact on people's quality of life.

What can you do to help yourself

Exercise

Exercise is a really useful to help reverse muscular deconditioning and to improve heart and lung function. You might find this hard at first but the key is to gradually build up how much you are doing over time. This can include gradually returning to all your previous activities

Goals:

Setting yourself goals of what you want to get back to and when can help with motivation

Emotional support:

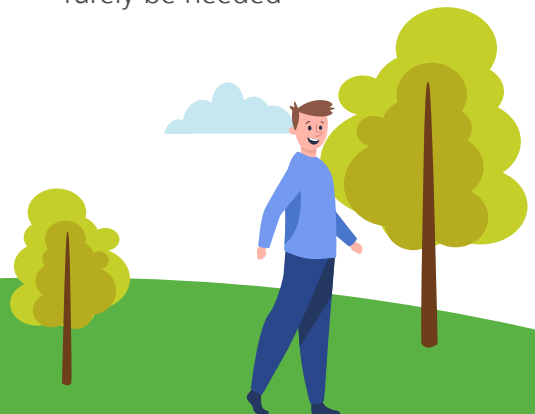
Your GP should be able to refer you to psychological therapies including the talking therapies service which you may find useful. For those people who had a long stay in intensive care there are post ITU support groups/online communities which allow you to speak with others who have had similar experiences to you

Equipment:

Some people may need equipment such as walking aids to help them return to their everyday activities.

Interventions to help breathing (see Resources section)

- Planning your time to give a balance between activity and rest
- Relaxation techniques/anxiety management
- Positioning
- Breathing techniques – Purse lipped breathing
- Smoking cessation services
- Pulmonary rehab involving progressively increasing exercise
- Home Oxygen may rarely be needed



Recovering emotionally

After being ill, it may take many months for you to fully recover physically and psychologically. Your physical recovery is likely to impact upon how you are feeling. You may at first feel weak and it may require more effort to do previously simple tasks such as getting dressed and moving about.

This can make some people feel low in mood, as they do not feel 'back to their old selves'. It can also sometimes feel frustrating if you need a lot of help from other people – family, friends, carers – at this early stage.

Many people also think about what brought them into critical care in the first place, and can feel quite emotional as they come to terms with this. Lancashire NHS Trust has developed an online course to help recovery following Covid-19 that you may find useful: <https://covidpatientsupport.lthtr.nhs.uk>

Low mood and anxiety are a natural response to what you are going through. Social isolation, lack of support and experiencing illness when cut off from loved ones or symptoms that go on and on over a long period, can increase feelings of fear and anxiety. It helps to talk this through with someone so you can be supported from early on in your recovery.

Resources

Support groups following time in intensive care

ICUsteps is an intensive care patient support charity. They offer support and resources for patients and relatives. For example offering opportunity to talk with other people who've had similar experiences in their online community.

www.readingicusupport.co.uk

www.healthunlocked.com/icusteps

www.kcl.ac.uk/cicelysaunders/resources/khp-gp-breathlessness-resource.pdf

www.rcot.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-0

There is also a support group for people who have had Covid-19 whether or not they were in ICU:

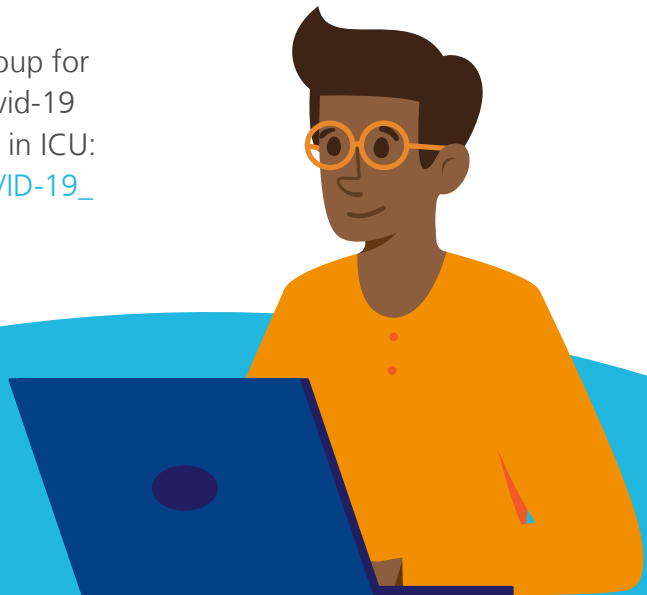
www.selfhelp.org.uk/COVID-19_Survivors_Group_UK

Intensive Care Society

The Intensive Care Society is an organisation in the UK that supports all intensive care professionals. They help identify and share best practice within the intensive care setting.

This information is mainly for healthcare professionals but you may find some of the information useful too.

www.ics.ac.uk/ICS/COVID-19/COVID-19_patient_and_relative/Patient_and_Relative_Resources.aspx



Physiotherapy

There is still lots to learn about Covid-19 but what we do know is that the road to recovery isn't always straightforward.

You can find out more by visiting the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy website: www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/covid-19-road-recovery



Feeling breathless while recovering from Covid-19

There are many causes of breathlessness, and you may feel much more breathless than you used to before you were unwell, and some people may still have a chronic cough. Resting for prolonged periods, whether in hospital or at home, can mean that your muscles may have become weaker and are not as ready to respond to exertion. It is this weakness that will contribute to your feelings of breathlessness. However you should monitor this and if it gets worse seek advice from your GP or 111.

Here are some positions that can help ease your breathlessness and can be used when resting or when moving around:



Relaxed sitting



Forward lean standing



Backward lean standing



Forward lean sitting



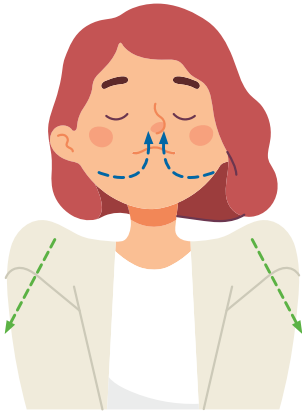
High side lying

If you're doing activities which make you feel breathless, try breathing in before you make the effort, then breathe out during the effort. For example, blow out as you step up.

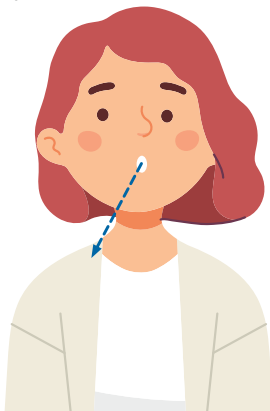
More breathlessness tips: www.kcl.ac.uk/cicelysaunders/resources/khp-gp-breathlessness-resource.pdf

Pursed lip breathing

1. Breathe in gently through your nose, try to relax your shoulders and neck to allow the air to fill up from the bottom of your lungs to the top of your chest.



2. Purse your lips like you're blowing bubbles or a candle out and breath out through your pursed lips.



Breath control while walking

If you are feeling breathless, try the following to help you walk on the flat, climb stairs and negotiate slopes. Try to keep your shoulders and upper chest relaxed and use your breathing control. Time your breathing with your stepping.

- Breathe in – count of 1 step
- Breathe out – count of 1 or 2 steps

A dry cough is a common symptom of COVID-19, so it's important to try to stay well hydrated. Here are some helpful hints to help you do this:

- Sipping a soft drink – take small sips, one after the other, avoid taking large sips
- Steam inhalation – pour hot water into a bowl and put your head over the bowl. If comfortable, cover your head and bowl with a towel
- Drink warm honey and lemon or another warm drink, this can help to soothe the throat
- If you do not have a drink to hand, but need to cough, try swallowing repeatedly. This can work in a similar way to sipping water

Getting stronger and being more active will help your recovery from Covid-19

If you have had a period of inactivity whilst suffering from Covid-19, it is likely that you will have some loss of muscle bulk as well as reduced stamina and increased levels of tiredness. You may also have muscle and joint pain and if you have been very unwell you can have a decrease in your bone density.

Exercise and gradual activity increase can help to reduce these problems by helping to improve heart and lung function which in turn can help prevent or reverse some of your physical deconditioning.

Other benefits include:

- Reducing pain
- Increasing/maintaining your joint range of movement
- Increasing your stamina/strength to perform some functional activities.

Planning your activities/exercise

Remember, it is common that energy levels are lower after a period of illness, so it is important to start rebuilding your routine and activities slowly.

It's important to think about mixing and matching your activities. For example, if you do a longer walk one day and your legs feel a little tired. Then the next day, plan to do some strengthening exercises for your arms to ensure you're not overloading one body part.

Great website with printable advice:

www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk

Regarding intensity of exercise

With any aerobic exercise such as walking, you should be a little out of breath, but you should still be able to complete a conversation.

When starting a new strengthening exercise programme, remember to warm up first and cool down afterwards and build up slowly. You can expect a little bit of aching and muscle soreness afterwards, this should stop after about 48 hours.

Precautions to exercising

Do not exercise to exhaustion: try to recognise when it's time to stop exercising

Pace yourself: consider the other activities that you have to do on a daily and weekly basis to make sure that you have enough energy to complete both your exercise programme and your daily activities.

Strength exercises

Please see next page for 6 simple strengthening exercises that will help to start rebuilding muscle strength

- To start with we recommend that you exercise little and often and gradually build up to being more active.
- To help keep you motivated, think about the activities you find difficult at the moment and what you'd like to be able to do in the future.
- Set yourself small, achievable goals and keep a record of them
- It helps to use activity apps or trackers on a mobile device.

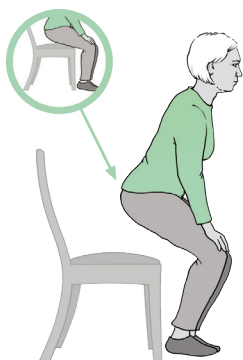
As you recover and are able to do more exercise, make sure you choose something you enjoy doing. You're more likely to stay focused and keep active if you've picked something you love to do!

Finding the balance between being active and resting may take time to get right, but building a daily routine can help you feel better. Try not rush or push yourself too hard, and don't feel discouraged if you experience a setback.

If you don't feel like your energy levels are returning, or activity is making you feel much worse, then speak to your GP or physiotherapist and ask them to assess you for Post Viral Fatigue Syndrome

“Your body has been through an ordeal and it's going to take time to get back to what you were.”

Covid-19: The Road to Recovery



Sit to stand

Sit tall near the front of a chair with your feet slightly back. Lean forwards slightly and stand up (with hands on the chair if needed). Step back until your legs touch the chair then slowly lower yourself back into the chair. Count how many exercises you can do in 1 minute.



Heel raises

Stand tall, holding the back of a sturdy kitchen-type chair or kitchen sink, then lift your heels off the floor, taking your weight onto your big toes. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control. Count how many exercises you can do in 1 minute.



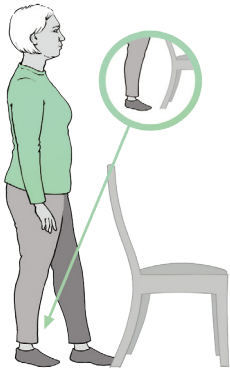
Toe raises

Stand tall holding the same support, then raise your toes – taking your weight on your heels. Don't stick your bottom out. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control. Count how many exercises you can do in 1 minute.



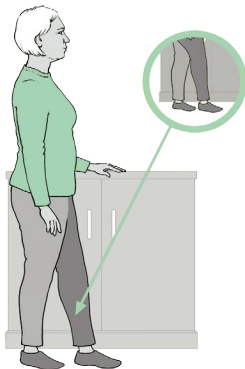
One leg stand

Stand close to your support and hold it with one hand. Balance on one leg, keeping the support knee soft and your posture upright. Hold the position for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other leg.



Heel-toe stand

Stand tall, with one hand on your support. Put one foot directly in front of the other to make a straight line. Look ahead, take your hand off the support and balance for 10 seconds. Take the front foot back to hip width apart. Then place the other foot in front and balance for 10 seconds.



Heel-toe walking

Stand tall, with one hand on a support like a kitchen cabinet. Look ahead and walk 10 steps forwards, placing one foot directly in front of the other so that the feet form a straight line. Aim for a steady walking action. Take the feet back to hip width apart, turn around and repeat the steps in the other direction.

Occupational Therapy

What is Covid Fatigue Syndrome?

It is characterised by profound, persistent, disabling physical and mental exhaustion, which is not relieved by rest or sleep. Fatigue is typically accompanied by a range of other symptoms including pain, headaches, impaired cognitive functioning: 'brain fog', increased sensitivity to stimuli and disrupted sleep.

The 4p's principle: prioritise, pace, plan, and position

Prioritise

- Decide what needs to be done today and what can be done at a later date or time. For example, going to a doctor's appointment would take priority over dusting the living room.
- When you have more than one thing to do, begin with the most important to make sure it gets done.

Pace

- Maintain a slow and steady pace. Never rush
- Rest often. Rest before you feel tired.
- Use pursed lip breathing. Breath in through your nose for a count of two and out from your mouth for a count of four. This is like blowing out a candle from a cake
- Listen to your body and know your limit

Example: Climbing stairs

Do: Climb three steps, rest for 30 seconds and repeat

The pacing approach: You won't need a long rest on the top and won't feel so tired the next day.

Dont: Climb all stairs at once.

The big push approach:

You'll have to rest for 10 minutes at the top, and feel achy and tired the next day.

Plan

- Plan your activities first to avoid extra trips. Gather the items you need before doing the job.
- Plan to alternate heavy and light tasks
- Plan activities throughout the week to avoid too many activities in one day.
- Plan to get a good rest each night
- Ask family or friends or pay for tasks that require too much energy

Position

Too much bending and reaching can cause fatigue and shortness of breath.

- Use a Reacher, sock aid, long handled shoe horn and elastic shoe laces
- Aim to maintain a nice and upright posture when sitting and standing. This helps you to get more oxygen into your lungs and allows your body to work better
- Sit when you can. Sitting reduces energy use by 25%

Fatigue impacts all our routines and impairs our ability to carry out usual activities and it takes time to recover. Small changes can often aid in managing and coping with fatigue.

Please speak to your GP or our therapists if the symptoms become overwhelming.

Energy conservation

Learning how to conserve your energy will help you to build up your strength to take part in your daily activities and other things you enjoy doing. When you learn to conserve your energy, you also reduce strain on your heart, fatigue, shortness of breath and stress related pain.

Learning to conserve your energy is all about finding a good balance between chores, rest and leisure.

Dressing and hygiene

- Sit when you can
- Organise and lay out clothing the night before
- Begin dressing your lower half first as this uses more energy
- Avoid bending and reaching
- Dry off with terry cloth robe. You use less energy than drying off with a towel.
- If you have a weaker limb, it is easier to dress the weaker limb first. It is easier to undress your strong limb first
- Be cautious when bathing – use warm not hot water. This helps eliminate shortness of breath from a build up of

steam and condensation

- Use the bathroom equipment suggested by your Occupational Therapist to aid in conserving your energy

Shopping

- Bring a prepared list of things you need to buy
- Organise your shopping list by aisle or section of the store
- Use a buggy to carry items
- Avoid going out during rush hour when stores are crowded
- Consider using a delivery service

Housework

- Balance light with heavy tasks
- Make one side of the bed at a time. Sit to change pillow cases and unfold linen.
- Clean the bath tub by sitting or kneeling – if too heavy ask Family or friends to help
- Clean one room at a time instead of running between rooms
- After washing dishes allow them to air dry
- Have work in front of you rather than on your side
- Slide rather than lift objects
- Make a weekly planner for

major jobs, such as cleaning, laundry or changing sheets and do one job each day

Cooking

- Cook and bake in steps to reduce energy use
- Gather all ingredients before starting
- Plan ahead with meal preparation
- Make larger meals and freeze in servings
- Use electric appliances such as can openers, blenders, food processors to conserve energy

Why can managing our routines and activities become so difficult?

- It brings us face to face with our limitations.
- Often our mind wants to push our body beyond its current capacity.
- We get into the flow of an activity and don't WANT to stop.
- We often feel we don't have any choice but to go ahead and do things.
- Guilt... for not being the person we were, or want to be

Tip – Use a TRAFFIC LIGHT system to help you identify which tasks are easier for you to do and those that require more energy on your part

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Shower and getting dressed	RED	GREEN	RED	GREEN	RED	AMBER	AMBER
Changing sheets	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	RED	AMBER	AMBER	RED
Making breakfast	AMBER	RED	AMBER	RED	AMBER	GREEN	RED

RED – This takes a lot of effort and energy.

AMBER – This is a bit much, but still manageable.

GREEN – I'm ok with this.

The **STOPP** acronym is a simple strategy to aid when dealing with these feelings.

Stop – just for a moment

Take a breath

Notice your breathing as you breathe in and out – in through the nose out through your mouth

Observe

What thoughts are going through your mind right now?
Where is your focus of attention?
What are you reacting to?
What sensations do you notice in your body?

Pull back

(put in some perspective)

What's the bigger picture?
Take the helicopter view. What is another way of looking at this situation? What advice would I give a friend? What would a trusted friend say to me right now? Is this thought a fact or opinion? What is a more reasonable explanation?
How important is this? How important will it be in 6 months' time? It will pass.

Practise that works

What is the best thing to do right now? Best for me, for others, for the situation? What can I do that fits with my values? Do what will be effective and appropriate.

www.getselfhelp.co.uk/stopp.htm

Psychological therapy

Are you feeling low or anxious?

Low mood and anxiety are a natural response to what you are going through.

Social isolation, lack of support and experiencing illness when cut off from our loved ones can increase our feelings of fear and anxiety.

**Getting help and support:
Talking helps**

Find your local Talking Therapies IAPT (Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies) service and make a self-referral: www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-psychological-therapies-service/

You can find out more about the Talking Therapies Services in North West London on this website at www.nhstalk2us.org

You can also talk to your Covid-19 follow-up team and ask for a referral to a psychology service if they are not part of the team.

Relaxation management

Relaxation is sometimes seen as a luxury, but regular relaxation and stress management are important for our physical and emotional health. Your body's stress response can get triggered often throughout the day and, if your body doesn't return to its regular state of relaxation afterward, you may get stressed.

Breathing >

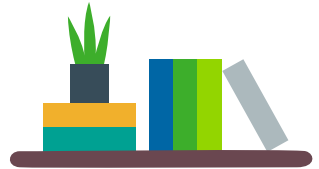
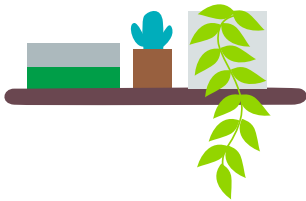
Exercise >

Meditation >

Read a book >

Music >

Calling friends or family



Talking Therapies IAPT

Dealing with your feelings

It is common to feel the following in the first month or two:

- Feeling upset and tearful
- Feeling snappy or irritable
- Feeling guilty for the worry everyone experienced
- Feeling tired
- Feeling like you have changed as a person and wondering if you will feel the same again
- Vivid dreams, nightmares or 'flashbacks' to when you were most ill
- Not fully remembering what happened in critical care
- Fear of stigma or contaminating others
- Loss of confidence
- Not returning to your usual sleeping patterns, or suffering loss of appetite
- Having strange memories of critical care

- Feeling scared you almost died
- Suffering effects on your memory, attention and thinking
- Worrying about getting ill again and increased attention to bodily symptoms

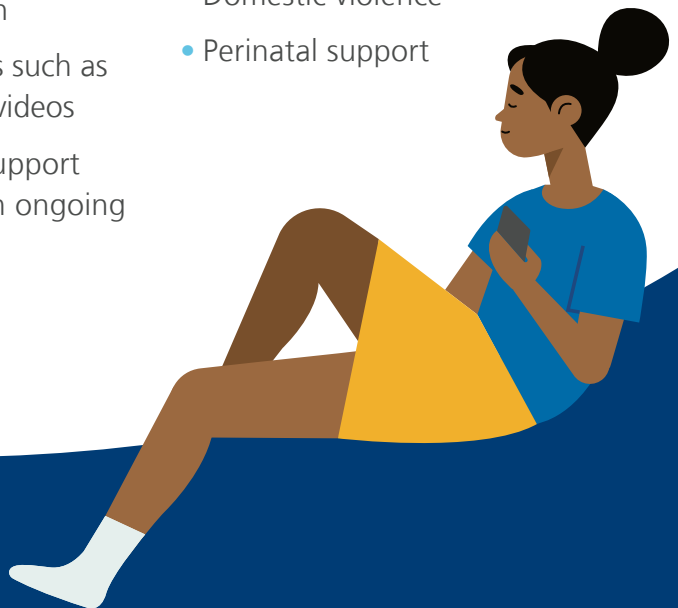
How can psychological support help?

- Feel less isolated and talk to someone who can support you with how you are feeling and managing
- Join a talking therapies group or sessions with others sharing similar difficulties
- Manage distressing thoughts and feelings
- Make more sense of experiences you describe from your critical care stay, now you have been discharged

- Consider the impact of the illness on yourself and those around you
- Look at how to use your existing strengths in coping
- Develop new approaches to coping and to see how they work out in practice
- Work on the best ways for you to communicate with the people around you
- Cope with the uncertainty of future health and treatment
- Adjust to everyday life whilst living with the effects of your health condition
- Help you progress with physical rehabilitation
- Find helpful resources such as Mindfulness apps or videos
- Help to join a local support group for others with ongoing or 'long' Covid

You or your relatives or friends may also be struggling with additional effects of the pandemic which are impacting on your life, your family or community, and your capacity to manage. A mental health support worker can help you talk through other issues you may be struggling with, including:

- Bereavement and loss
- Anxiety about returning to work or education
- Employment and financial worries
- Difficulties arising from being a carer
- Domestic violence
- Perinatal support



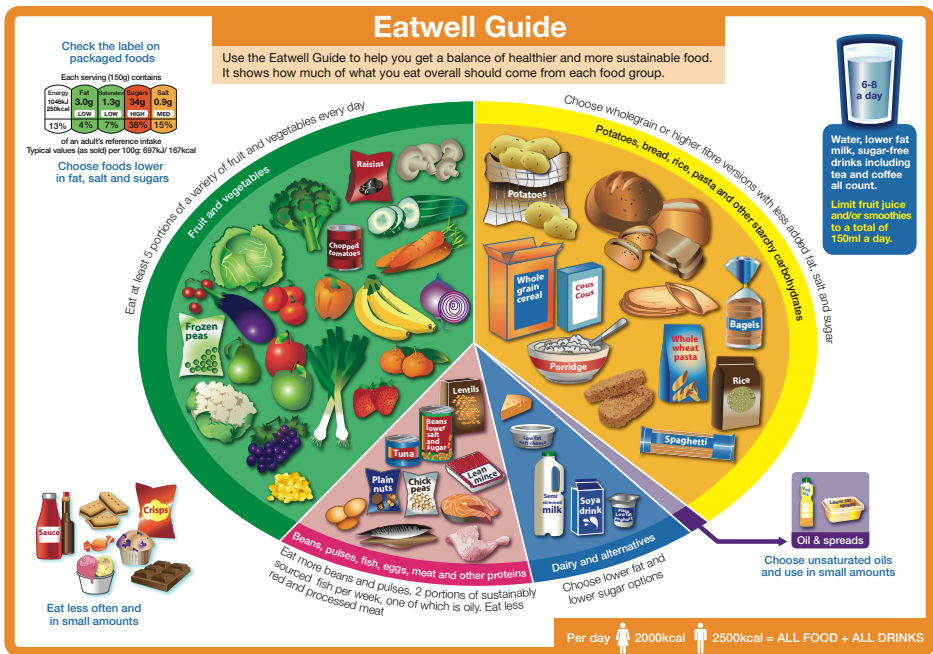
Dietetics

Being unwell with Covid-19 can have an impact on your nutrition due to taste changes, loss of appetite, difficulties shopping or difficulties with your swallowing.

You should aim to continue having a healthy balanced diet to provide adequate nutrition.

However if you are struggling to eat enough and are losing weight, you may need to make some changes to your diet.

It's important to have a balanced diet so try to include food from every group



You can view a larger version of the above here:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/528193/Eatwell_guide_colour.pdf

Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein

Help with muscle repair, especially important when recovering from being unwell. Examples include meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, tofu, nuts, dairy products. Include a protein source at each meal to make sure you are having enough to build your strength.

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrate foods

For energy and B vitamins. Examples include rice, pasta, couscous, roti, chapatti, potatoes. Try to choose wholegrain varieties such as wholemeal bread or brown pasta to increase fibre.

Fruit and vegetables

For fibre, vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants. Aim for 5 portions a day. Frozen, dried and canned varieties count too.

Dairy products and alternatives

For healthy teeth & bones. Examples include milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified dairy free alternatives.

Fluids

For hydration. Aim for 6-8 cups (approximately 2 litres) per day. Examples include water, juice, tea, coffee, and milk.

Are you at risk of malnutrition?

Many people who have or have had coronavirus are at risk of malnutrition.

You may be at risk of malnutrition if:

- You have noticed you have lost weight e.g. loose clothing, jewellery, needing another hole in your belt
- Your weight is low in relation to your height.

You can check your risk here:

www.malnutritionselfscreening.org/self-screening.html

If you are at high risk or malnutrition, you should be referred to a dietitian. You can speak to your GP about this. If you live in Hillingdon, you can self-refer to the dietitians at CARS, by calling the contact centre.

Social isolation could be having a greater impact during this difficult time. The impact on your health and wellbeing can mean you don't eat so well. It can also make you feel weaker and delay your recovery.

If you are overweight and unwell, now is not the time to aim to lose weight, as you can lose muscle mass which can slow your recovery. You should wait until you feel better, so you can lose weight safely.

Tips if you are struggling to eat enough:

- Eat little and often – have smaller meals and regular nourishing snacks
- Choose high energy snacks such as biscuits, cheese, cake and custard, chocolate, crisps
- Make your meals extra nourishing by adding extra butter, cream, cheese, skimmed milk powder, ground nuts, nut butters
- Switch to full fat milk, and make it extra nourishing by stirring in 1-2 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder. Use this in hot drink or in meals e.g. porridge, or as a refreshing drink
- Avoid drinking too much just before a meal as this can fill you up

Eating difficulties and coronavirus

Some people experience loss of taste, dry mouth, and shortness of breath with coronavirus. Below are some helpful tips for if this happens to you.

Dry mouth

- Make sure you drink enough fluid – aim for 6-8 cups per day
- Add sauces to your food to make them more moist
- Suck sweets or chew gum to stimulate

Loss of taste

- Experiment with different flavours such as herbs, spices, pepper, chutneys and pickles, lemon juices, garlic when cooking.
- Try varying temperatures – hot or cold foods can stimulate the taste buds
- Add gravies and sauces to meals
- Choose stronger versions of your favourite foods e.g. smoked meats, pickled foods, strongly flavoured cheese
- Tarts foods have a strong taste – try lemon or orange flavours
- Keep your mouth clean and brush your teeth well

Shortness of breath

- Include smaller meals and more regular snacks
- Take your time when eating
- Use sauces to make your foods moister and easier to swallow

Do I need any vitamin and mineral supplements?

A healthy balanced diet should provide all the nutrients you need. The only exception is Vitamin D, which mostly comes from sunlight. Try to spend around 30 minutes per day in the sunshine.

You should consider taking a vitamin D supplement if you are not able to spend time outside, and during the winter months when the sun is not bright enough. If you are unable to follow a balanced diet, you should consider taking an A-Z multivitamin.



I am struggling with my shopping, what can I do?

If you are in isolation, you may not be able to go out to the shops. Here are some tips that might help:

- Choose long lasting items that keep for longer such as canned fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, beans; long life, dried, condensed or evaporated milk; dry pasta, rice, or couscous; instant mashed potato; drinking chocolate, milkshake powder, malted milk drinks; and frozen items such as ready meals, meat, vegetables, samosas, fruit, ice cream and desserts
- Ask friends, family or carers to help with shopping.
- If your friends and family are unable to help and you live in Hillingdon, you can request help from H4ALL – simply email COVID19Hub@hillingdon.gov.uk or call 020 3949 5786.

Alternatively, speak with your GP or another healthcare professional who can refer you to the NHS volunteer scheme.

Use meal delivery services:

Apetito

Check your postcode as this service only runs for some areas

T: 0800 066 2790

www.apetito.co.uk/our-services/home-delivery-services

Oakhouse Foods

www.oakhousefoods.co.uk

T: 0333 370 6700

Parsley Box

T: 0800 612 7225

www.parsleybox.com

Wiltshire Farm Foods

www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com

T: 0800 077 3100



Speech and Language Therapy

Difficulties with swallowing and/or communicating after Covid-19?

Some people experience swallowing and/or voice difficulties following Covid-19 infection, this may include hypersensitivity. These difficulties are particularly common amongst people who were treated in hospital with a breathing tube whilst in the prone position.

Tips for mouthcare:

- Brush teeth and mouth twice a day using toothpaste
- Drink plenty of fluids
- If dentures are worn, regularly remove and clean both the dentures and your mouth
- Use lip balm if lips are dry
- Monitor for any signs of oral thrush

Tips for your voice:

- Drink plenty of water
- Speak in shorter sentences
- Avoid throat clearing – take small sips of fluids
- Complete voice rest is not needed. Continue using normal voice, do not deliberately whisper

- Avoid talking over background noise
- Voice may fatigue quicker than usual. Take breaks from talking to give time to recover
- Until normal voice has returned it is best to avoid shouting or singing
- Avoid the use of medicated throat sweets
- Limit the time using phone or video calls

Tips for swallowing:

- Take small bites or sips
- Ensure sitting fully upright
- Eat or drink at a slower pace
- Consider adding extra moisture to foods to combat oral dryness and pain
- Eat little and often throughout the day if feeling fatigued. Choosing softer options will require less chewing.

When to consult your GP:

- If your voice has not returned to normal 6-8 weeks after onset of COVID-19 symptoms, contact your GP. A referral to ENT may be appropriate.
- If you're experiencing pain and/or difficulty swallowing food or drink beyond 6-8 weeks of

the onset of symptoms, please contact GP as a referral to ENT or Speech and Language Therapy may be appropriate.

Returning to work

Going back to work (voluntary or paid) after illness can be challenging.

Persisting symptoms such as shortness of breath, fatigue, poor concentration, and anxiety can all make return to work more difficult. The longer you are off sick, the harder it can be to go back to work.

Doing the right kind of work is good for your mental and physical health, even if you have a health condition.

You can find more information about returning to work here: www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk/your-road-to-recovery/returning-to-work

You should talk to your employer about how to manage your condition at work and the right time to return.

This document is also available in other languages, large print, Braille, and audio format upon request. Please email communications.cnwl@nhs.net

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضاً بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة برايل للمكفوفين وبصيغة سمعية عند الطلب

Arabic

این مدرک همچنین بنا به درخواست به زبانهای دیگر، در چاپ درشت و در فرمت صوتی موجود است.

Farsi

এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায়, বড় প্রিন্ট আকারে, ব্রেল এবং অডিও টেপ আকারেও অনুরোধ পাওয়া যায়

Bengali

Dokumentigaan waxaa xitaa lagu heli karaa luqado kale, daabacad far waa-wayn, farta indhoolaha (Braille) iyo hab dhegaysi ah markii la soo codsado.

Somali

Mediante solicitação, este documento encontra-se também disponível noutras línguas, num formato de impressão maior, em Braille e em áudio.

Portuguese

நீங்கள் கேட்டுக்கொண்டால், இந்த ஆவணம் வேறு மொழிகளிலும், பெரிய எழுத்து அச்சிலும் அல்லது ஒலிநாடா வடிவிலும் அளிக்கப்படும்.

Tamil

Este documento también está disponible y puede solicitarse en otros idiomas, letra grande, braille y formato de audio.

Spanish

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w formacie audio.

Polish

આ દસ્તાવેજ વિનંતી કરવાથી બીજી ભાષાઓ, મોટા છાપેલા અક્ષરો અથવા ઓડિઓ રચનામાં પણ મળી રહેશે.

Gujarati

Be belge istenirse, başka dillerde, iri harflerle, Braille ile (görme engelliler için) ve ses kasetinde de temin edilebilir.

Turkish