

Post Covid-19 Self Help Rehabilitation Guide

What is Covid, post Covid and long Covid

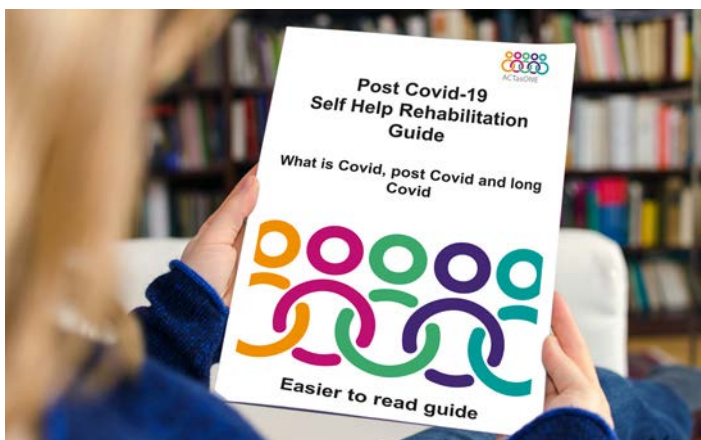


Easier to read guide

Introduction



These booklets are for people who have had Covid-19 and have symptoms that have lasted for more than 4 weeks.



There are 6 booklets in total. This one is about Covid, post Covid and long Covid.



The booklets have been developed by lots of different healthcare professionals.

They work together to help people with long Covid.

What is Covid-19?



Covid-19 is an infectious virus that mainly affects your lungs.

Infectious means it spreads very easily and quickly to others.



Most of the people who get Covid-19 have mild to moderate symptoms.

They recover without needing any special treatment.



Some people though need hospital treatment. This might include being on a ventilator. This is a machine that helps you to breathe.



When people start to get better from Covid-19 they might get breathless when they are resting and doing things. This is normal.

What is long Covid or post Covid syndrome?



After getting Covid-19 most people start to feel better in a few weeks.

Unfortunately some people take longer to get better.

If you have signs and symptoms that last up to 4 weeks it is called acute Covid-19.



Long Covid is used to describe signs or symptoms that last for more than 12 weeks.

They can affect your whole body. They may change over time as well.



The symptoms may be called different things by different health professionals.

You might have the same symptoms or new ones and they might come and go over time.



They can be different for different people and there may be lots of them.

Some of the most common ones are listed on the next page.

Some of the common symptoms of long Covid



- Respiratory symptoms like being breathless and having a cough
- Cardiovascular symptoms. These are symptoms to do with your heart and circulation. Chest tightness, chest pain and palpitations



- General symptoms like fatigue, fever and pain
- Pain in muscle and joints
- Headaches, not being able to sleep, and feeling dizzy



- Tummy pain, diarrhoea, feeling and being sick
- Depression and anxiety



- Earache, sore throat and not being able to taste and smell
- Skin rashes.

The importance of rehabilitation



Rehabilitation means helping you get back to being healthy and being able to do the things you could before you were ill.



Due to your Covid-19 infection you may find you are struggling with things that you found normal before.

This might be things like having a shower, reading a book, or swallowing.



You might feel that your muscles are not as strong and you might not be able to exercise like you could before.



These things can all be a side effect of not being as active while you are recovering, even if you weren't in hospital.



While you are recovering, rehabilitation will help all these things to get better.



You will be given advice about breathing techniques, exercises and self-care.

These things will help you get back to your normal way of life.



It is really important that you start small and don't do too much at once.

You should then build up your activities but slow down if they start to make your symptoms worse.



Research shows that if you 'push through' when you don't feel well this could slow down your recovery.



When you are at home keep up with your breathing exercises.

Follow the other advice that you have been given too. This will help to slowly work towards getting back to your old routine.



It might be frustrating to do things so slowly but this is best.

Many people with long Covid tell us that when they have slowed down they have noticed a quicker rate of recovery.



Drinking plenty of water and eating a healthy diet will play an important role in getting you better too.

This resource was developed collectively by members of the multidisciplinary team featuring healthcare professionals working in health organisations across Bradford district and Craven. We are grateful to Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust for giving us permission to use and adapt their resource for Bradford district and Craven patients.

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