

The Effects of Long COVID and Treatments

LEARN THE FACTS

? What is Long COVID?

Long COVID (post COVID-19 syndrome) describes the effects that last more than four weeks after diagnosis of the virus. Older people and those with serious medical conditions are the most likely to have these symptoms, or effects, that linger. But, even young, otherwise healthy people can feel unwell for weeks and months after infection.¹ In either case, these are called long haulers.²

Long haulers have, in theory, recovered from the worst impacts of COVID-19 and tested negative for the virus. But, they still have symptoms.

And, it seems like there's no clear reason for this to happen.

The CDC estimates 10 to 30 percent of people who had COVID-19 are long haulers. This can affect anyone – if you are old or young, overall healthy or with another condition. It can occur if you're hospitalized or have a mild case and recover at home.³

Long COVID can include the same symptoms you had when you were first sick. This could include shortness of breath or fatigue. Or, there you may have new symptoms. After you've improved and recovered, all of a sudden, one month later, you might feel worse for months.⁴



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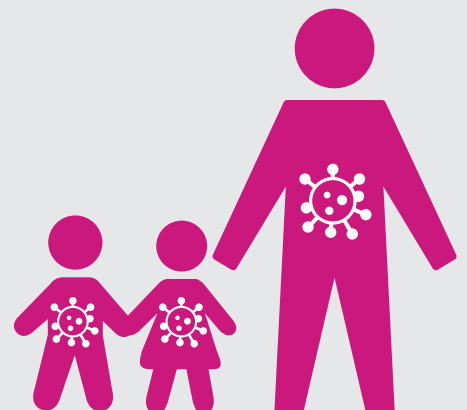
Can anyone get long COVID?

Yes. Both children and adults can experience Long COVID. Symptoms can develop after severe, mild or asymptomatic cases.

What are symptoms of Long COVID?

You might have:⁵

- Joint or muscle pain
- Pins and needles
- Sleep problems or insomnia
- Fever
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Rash
- Change in mood
- Loss of smell or taste
- Change in menstrual period cycles
- Cough and shortness of breath
- Extreme fatigue
- Difficulty in thought or focus (often called brain fog)
- Pain in your chest or stomach (may include diarrhea or nausea)
- Headache
- Fast or pounding heartbeat



(continued)

? How long do symptoms last?

You could feel better in a few weeks or struggle for months or longer. Long COVID issues vary and the long-term impact is still unknown.

? Does Long COVID cause permanent damage?

It's not clear how long the symptoms or damage will last. You could get acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), which can lead to lasting lung scars. Or, you could have a long-term loss of smell and taste, with unknown damage. Experts do believe that your sense of smell and taste will return. And, for most people, many of the symptoms cease, but it's uncertain when that will happen.

? How are Long COVID symptoms treated?

A variety of treatments and supports exist. Primary care physicians, behavioral health specialists, pulmonologists, neurologists, cardiologists, gastroenterologists, ENTs (ear, nose and throat), pain specialists and others work with people who have Long COVID.

? Will experts keep learning more about Long COVID?

Studies are underway. Other research will likely focus on symptoms, care and recovery in both children and adults. That also includes COVID's impact on organs, the nervous system, mental health and daily life. Public health issues, such as Long COVID's impact on people in places with disparities and compromised immune systems, are of particular concern.

This is general information, not medical advice. If you have questions or issues, consult your doctor.

¹<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-long-term-effects/art-20490351>

²<https://health.ucdavis.edu/health-news/coronavirus/covid-19-long-hauler-patients-search-for-answers-and-help/2020/10>

³<https://health.ucdavis.edu/coronavirus/covid-19-information/covid-19-long-haulers.html>

⁴<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/04/harvard-medical-school-expert-explains-long-covid/>

⁵<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html>

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