



# Long Covid How to Prepare for The Future



HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW...

**Covid-19 isn't just a viral infection. It can also inflict lasting harm on lungs and other internal organs. We don't yet understand the full implications of this.**

For some people who contract Covid-19, the after effects can be significant and debilitating. We know that older people are more likely to suffer serious illness and need hospitalisation than younger age groups. It also seems like older people are more prone to so-called 'long covid' symptoms that can last for months after recovering from the worst of the virus.

## What is Long Covid?

Sometimes known as post Covid-19 syndrome, long covid is a general term for a range of conditions that persist after you recover from the virus infection. Most people make a full recovery from the virus within 12 weeks but for others they have conditions that last much longer. In reality, we don't know how long because the condition is new.

Even people who were not hospitalised or who had a fairly mild illness can suffer from long covid. Symptoms sometimes develop and become worse several weeks later.

According to the NHS website common long COVID symptoms include:

- extreme tiredness (fatigue)
- shortness of breath
- chest pain or tightness
- problems with memory and concentration ("brain fog")
- difficulty sleeping (insomnia)
- heart palpitations
- dizziness
- pins and needles
- joint pain
- depression and anxiety
- tinnitus, earaches
- feeling sick, diarrhea, stomach aches, loss of appetite
- a high temperature, cough, headaches, sore throat, changes to sense of smell or taste
- rashes

For older people there are particular risks affecting loss of muscle mass, malnutrition, depression and delirium.

It's easy to see how many of these symptoms could interfere with your ability to lead a normal life and cope with some everyday tasks.



## Contact Your GP

Whenever you develop any serious health conditions you should always contact your GP in the first instance.

The NHS website recommends that you contact your GP if you have symptoms four or more weeks after having Covid-19 as you should normally expect to be well on the road to recovery by this time.

Your GP will probably conduct tests for any possible underlying causes such as anemia or abnormal blood pressure, which may be treatable or unrelated to the virus.

The conclusion might be that you just have to give it time, take gentle exercise more regularly and try to rest. This still leaves you - and probably family members and informal carers - with the issue of how to cope in the meantime.



## A Care Needs Assessment

Long covid is no different to health conditions with any other underlying causes when it comes to getting help.

If you are struggling to cope you are entitled to a care needs assessment from your local council social services team.

A care needs assessment doesn't necessarily mean that your care will be fully funded by the council - that will depend on your finances. If you are eligible for financial assistance the assessment is the essential first step. Even if you have to pay for your care the assessment will help you understand your needs and select the most suitable care plan.



## What Help Can You Get?

Depending on how severe your symptoms are there are plenty of choices.

Having somebody come to your home for a few hours each week will help you stay on top of housework and other routine tasks. These visits can also help you deal with depression and anxiety.

If you need a greater level of help or medical care this can also be arranged either through live-in care or maybe a spell in residential care.

It's also important to remember the potential impact on family members and informal carers. Everyone has been through a difficult time during the pandemic. Arranging residential or care at home for a short period of time will help them enjoy a much needed break.



Altogether Care offers a full range of care services to suit your needs and preferences.

Our care packages are also flexible so that you can change your support package as the severity of your symptoms changes.

For more information, contact **01305 206 140** or email **contact@altogethercare.co.uk**.

Calculate care costs here:

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