

# LONG COVID AND COVID LONG-HAULERS



## What is long COVID?

Long COVID is when symptoms last weeks or months after a person first gets sick with COVID-19. In some cases, symptoms suddenly appear weeks after having a positive COVID test or being sick. Long COVID can happen to anyone who has had COVID-19, even if the illness was mild, and even if they had no symptoms at first. People with these continuing symptoms often call themselves “COVID long-haulers.”

## Long COVID symptoms

Because COVID-19 affects many different parts of the body, there are lots of possible symptoms and they can differ from person to person. Long COVID symptoms may include:

- Tiredness or fatigue
- Difficulty thinking or concentrating (sometimes this is called “brain fog”)
- Headache
- Loss of smell or taste
- Dizziness on standing
- Fast-beating or pounding heart
- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Cough
- Joint or muscle pain
- Depression or anxiety
- Fever
- Symptoms that get worse after physical or mental activities



## Who gets long COVID?

Not a lot is known about long COVID yet, but we do know that even people who have very mild symptoms at first, or no symptoms at all, can experience long COVID.

One study showed that 2 to 3 weeks after getting sick with COVID-19, one in three people still hadn’t returned to their previous level of health. Another study showed that 2 months after COVID-19 infection, two out of three people still had at least one symptom that remained.

Anyone who has had COVID-19 can develop long COVID, including:

- People with severe COVID-19 symptoms
- People with mild COVID-19 symptoms
- People who showed no symptoms of COVID-19
- People with no underlying conditions
- People who are younger

## Treatment for long COVID

We are still learning about long COVID. Right now, doctors treat long COVID symptoms as they show up. You should call your regular health care provider if you think you are experiencing long COVID, and call 911 if you think you may be experiencing a medical emergency.

OHSU, Providence, and Kaiser are all setting up special clinics for people with long COVID. Other systems might also. Contact your personal health care provider for more information.

Getting good sleep, regular physical activity, and eating healthy foods are important for recovery from any illness.

## How can you avoid long COVID?

The best way to avoid long COVID is to take steps to avoid getting COVID-19 in the first place:

- Get vaccinated for COVID-19
- Wear a mask, especially when you are inside around a lot of people
- Wash your hands



### Resources to Learn More about Long COVID

[Post-COVID Conditions](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

[When COVID-19 Symptoms Linger](#) (National Institutes of Health)

[Clinical Guidelines: Long COVID-19](#) (Oregon Health & Science University)

[COVID 'LongHaulers': Long Term Effects of COVID-19](#) (Johns Hopkins University)