

“Long-haulers” after COVID: What do you do when the symptoms won’t go away?

Most people recover fully and quickly from COVID-19 — but some don’t. It’s possible to have physical and mental symptoms that develop during or after infection. This syndrome is often known as “long COVID,” and people who have it are called “long-haulers.”

Symptoms of long COVID generally last more than a month and can’t be explained by another cause. Even though your infection has cleared, some symptoms linger or you develop new ones. Why does this happen for some people and not others? It’s not clear yet.

Although it may be worse in people who were very sick with COVID and had to be hospitalized, even young and previously healthy people who only had mild infections can get long COVID.

Common long COVID symptoms include:

- Fatigue
- Getting short of breath with exertion
- Chest pain
- Cough
- Joint pain and body aches
- Headaches
- Loss of smell or taste
- Hair loss
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Poor memory or concentration

If you have symptoms of long COVID, you may need closer evaluation. This could mean laboratory tests and tests of your heart and lungs, though it will vary from person to person. You might also need rehabilitation or medications to help with symptoms.

Regardless of how severe your case is and whether you need treatment, recovering from COVID can be slow. It’s common for people with long COVID to have symptoms for many months.

Having symptoms of long COVID? Talk to your Geisinger primary care physician. They can give you a thorough evaluation and if needed, refer you to our new Post-COVID Clinic, which specializes in caring for people with long-term COVID symptoms.

Schedule an appointment with a primary care doctor online via MyGeisinger or by calling 800-275-6401.