

# Long-Term Effects of COVID-19

## Stakeholder Toolkit – October 2021

### Long COVID?

I still feel |



I still feel fatigued, weak, breathless

I still feel achy

**Find the right advice about long COVID**



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot



# The Campaign

## Long COVID Campaign

On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October, the Scottish Government launched the **Long COVID Awareness Campaign**, which involves partnership marketing with key stakeholders within the health care sector.

The aim of this Long COVID awareness marketing campaign is to encourage those who are suffering, or know of someone suffering from the long-term effects of COVID-19 to consider their symptoms. The campaign highlights helpful tips to help those suffering self-manage these symptoms.

It also provides reassurance to those suffering that they are not alone and encourages them to seek further information and support via the resources signposted.

## Key Messages

- Long-term effects of COVID-19 (long COVID) can include symptoms such as fatigue, breathlessness, muscle and joint pain, difficulty concentrating or loss of taste or smell. However, it's a new condition and therefore more symptoms could arise.
- Symptoms can change over time and can affect anywhere in the body.
- Even if you were unaware you had COVID-19 (asymptomatic when infected), you can still suffer from the long-term effects of COVID-19.
- If you are suffering from the long-term effects of COVID-19 then you are not alone and there is support available.
- To find out more about the long-term effects of COVID-19, visit [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid) or call the NHS inform helpline on **0800 22 44 88**.

# Implementation Support Note

## **Note for Clinicians**

There is an implementation support note available for clinicians on managing the long-term effects of COVID-19 in primary and community care. This provides additional targeted information for clinicians and to support health care teams caring for people who have signs and symptoms during or following infection consistent with COVID-19.

The implementation support note provides supplementary information to support the implementation of the SIGN guideline recommendations, with information and links to resources to support a consistent national approach to clinical assessment, shared decision making and individualised care planning conversations. This includes self management and further referral where needed.

This Scottish Government publication is intended to complement SIGN Guideline 161 on managing the long-term effects of COVID-19. It does not replace or supersede the SIGN guidelines as the primary source of clinical guidance on managing the long-term effects of COVID-19.

- [The implementation support note can be accessed here.](#)
- [SIGN guidelines can be accessed here.](#)

# Campaign Materials

## Campaign Assets

This toolkit provides stakeholders with useful campaign materials which can be disseminated to their audiences through the appropriate channels. Campaign materials include the following:

- **Poster** in A1, A3 and A4
- **Social post** for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
- **Summary sheet** in the following languages and formats:

- Arabic
- Polish
- Punjabi
- Simplified Chinese
- Urdu
- Easy read
- Large print
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Audio

- **Editorial** in long and short form
- **WhatsApp/ text message copy**

All of these campaign materials can be found on the following pages 5 – 12 of this toolkit document.

**Long COVID?**

I still feel |

I still feel fatigued, weak, breathless  
I still feel achy  
I still feel like I can't concentrate  
I still feel like I can't taste or smell  
I still feel like I have COVID

Find the right advice about long COVID

Worried about symptoms you've had for a few weeks or longer? To find out more about the long term effects of COVID-19, visit [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid) or call the NHS inform helpline on 0800 22 44 88.

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**Longer-term effects of COVID-19 (long COVID)**

**What is long COVID?**

Most people's symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) get better within 4 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer or new ones can develop. Symptoms can also change over time and can affect anywhere in the body. This has been referred to as long COVID.

Healthcare professionals may refer to long COVID as:

- Ongoing symptomatic COVID-19 (4 to 12 weeks)
- Post-COVID-19 syndrome (over 12 weeks)

Contact your GP practice if:

- You're worried about your symptoms
- Your symptoms are getting worse

**Common symptoms and how to manage them**

**Fatigue**

During your recovery from any illness, including coronavirus, you may experience fatigue. Fatigue means you have less physical, mental and emotional energy to do daily activities, like taking, moving around or making decisions.

Tip: Try to break your day into small parts and set easy goals to begin with. Rest between activities and only do what you feel able to do.

**Breathlessness**

You may get short of breath more easily. This can happen even if you haven't needed treatment in hospital for coronavirus. Breathlessness can feel scary, but there are several things you can do to help.

Tip: Try breathing in before you start to move, then breathing out when you make a big effort, such as bending down, lifting heavy things, or going up stairs.

**Cough**

Some viral infections, including coronavirus, can leave you with a dry cough because your lungs have been irritated. Some may have a cough with phlegm.

Tip: Make sure you keep yourself well hydrated by drinking small amounts often throughout the day. If you feel yourself starting to cough, take small sips of liquid.

**Muscle and joint pain**

You may experience pain after coronavirus.

Tip: Try to pace yourself. If your pain is stopping you completing a task you can try again later. It can be hard to relax, but doing something you enjoy will help you feel good and reduce the stress of pain.

**Sleep problems**

It's common to sleep more when your body is fighting an infection. While you're recovering it's also common to have disturbed sleep patterns.

Tip: Get ready for bed at the same time each night, avoid screens for at least two hours before bed, and don't have tea or coffee before going to sleep. If you're struggling to drift off, try getting up and relaxing in another room until you feel tired again.

**Low mood, depression and anxiety**

Being unwell can have an impact on your mental health. You may feel low in mood, have difficulty concentrating or have feelings of worry and panic.

Tip: Try to stick to a daily routine, limit alcohol intake and maintain a well-balanced diet. Talk to friends and family about how you are feeling. If your symptoms aren't improving after a couple of weeks, speak to your GP.

**Further information and support**

If you're worried about your symptoms, don't struggle alone. Find out more about recovery from long COVID at [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid) or call the NHS inform helpline on 0800 22 44 88.

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# Poster

## Campaign Poster

There is a campaign poster available in the A1, A3 and A4 sizes.

These posters are to be printed and displayed in key areas such as reception areas, waiting rooms or other highly visible areas.

- [The poster is available to download via WeTransfer in all sizes here.](#)

**Long COVID?**

I still feel | 🔍

I still feel fatigued, weak, breathless  
I still feel achy  
I still feel like I can't concentrate  
I still feel like I can't taste or smell  
I still feel like I have COVID

**Find the right advice about long COVID**

Worried about symptoms you've had for a few weeks or longer? To find out more about the long term effects of COVID-19, visit [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid) or call the NHS inform helpline on **0800 22 44 88**.

**NHS**  
SCOTLAND

**Healthier  
Scotland**  
Scottish  
Government

# Social Post

## Social Image

There is a campaign social image available to post across Facebook, Instagram and/ or Twitter channels.

- [The social image is available to download via WeTransfer in all sizes here.](#)

## Social Copy

The following text can be used in conjunction with the social image to form a social post:

*Worried about symptoms you've had for a few weeks or longer?  
To find out more about the long term effects of COVID-19, visit [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid) or call the NHS inform helpline on 0800 22 44 88.*



# Summary Sheet

## Campaign Summary Sheet

The summary sheet explains some of the longer-term effects of COVID-19 and suggests tips on how to self-manage symptoms. This sheet also signposts the NHS inform long COVID microsite and the NHS helpline for further support.

The summary sheet can be used in a similar way to a leaflet or flyer. It can be printed and distributed at key patient/ visitor points, or circulated by email to individuals/ groups who could benefit from the information.

- [The summary sheet in English is available to download via WeTransfer here.](#)

## Alternative Languages and Formats

The summary sheet is available in additional languages including Arabic, Polish, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese and Urdu.

It is also available in alternative formats including large print, easy read, British Sign Language (BSL) and audio.

- [The summary sheet is available to download via WeTransfer in alternative languages and formats here.](#)

**Longer-term effects of COVID-19 (long COVID)**

**What is long COVID?**

Most people's symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) get better within 4 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer or new ones can develop. Symptoms can also change over time and can affect anywhere in the body. This has been referred to as long COVID.

Healthcare professionals may refer to long COVID as:

- Ongoing symptomatic COVID-19 (4 to 12 weeks)
- Post-COVID-19 syndrome (over 12 weeks)

Contact your GP practice if:

- You're worried about your symptoms
- Your symptoms are getting worse

**Common symptoms and how to manage them**

**Fatigue**

During your recovery from any illness, including coronavirus, you may experience fatigue. Fatigue means you have less physical, mental and emotional energy to do daily activities, like talking, moving around or making decisions.

Tip: Try to break your day into small parts and set easy goals to begin with. Rest between activities and only do what you feel able to do.

**Breathlessness**

You may get short of breath more easily. This can happen even if you haven't needed treatment in hospital for coronavirus. Breathlessness can feel scary, but there are several things you can do to help.

Tip: Try breathing in before you start to move, then breathing out when you make a big effort, such as bending down, lifting heavy things, or going up stairs.

**Cough**

Some viral infections, including coronavirus, can leave you with a dry cough because your lungs have been irritated. Some may have a cough with phlegm.

Tip: Make sure you keep yourself well hydrated by drinking small amounts often throughout the day. If you feel yourself starting to cough, take small sips of liquid.

**Muscle and joint pain**

You may experience pain after coronavirus.

Tip: Try to pace yourself. If your pain is stopping you completing a task you can try again later. It can be hard to relax, but doing something you enjoy will help you feel good and reduce the stress of pain.

**Sleep problems**

It's common to sleep more when your body is fighting an infection. While you're recovering, it's also common to have disturbed sleep patterns.

Tip: Get ready for bed at the same time each night, avoid screens for at least two hours before bed, and don't have tea or coffee before going to sleep. If you're struggling to drift off, try getting up and relaxing in another room until you feel tired again.

**Low mood, depression and anxiety**

Being unwell can have an impact on your mental health. You may feel low in mood, have difficulty concentrating or have feelings of worry and panic.

Tip: Try to stick to a daily routine, limit alcohol intake and maintain a well-balanced diet. Talk to friends and family about how you are feeling. If your symptoms aren't improving after a couple of weeks, speak to your GP.

**Further information and support**

If you're worried about your symptoms, don't struggle alone. Find out more about recovery from long COVID, at [NHS Inform](https://nhs.uk/long-covid), [nhs.uk/long-covid](https://nhs.uk/long-covid) or call the NHS inform helpline on 0800 22 44 88.

# Editorial Explained

## Campaign Editorial

There is a long and short version of the campaign editorial available.

The long version is suited to platforms holding longer narrative such as websites, or to form an article. The short editorial is better suited as an excerpt in a newsletter or as part of an email update, for example. However, both versions of the editorial can be used at your discretion.

The editorial can be downloaded on the link below, or can be copied and pasted from the following pages.

- [The short and long versions of the editorial are available to download via WeTransfer here.](#)





# Short Editorial

## What is long COVID?

Most people's symptoms of coronavirus get better within 4 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer, or new ones can develop. This has been referred to as long COVID. Symptoms can also change over time and can affect anywhere in the body. Contact your GP practice if :

- you're worried about your symptoms
- your symptoms are getting worse

## Common symptoms

There are symptoms you should look out for. They include fatigue, breathlessness, muscle and joint pain, difficulty concentrating or loss of taste or smell.

## Further information and support

If you're worried about your symptoms, don't struggle alone. Find out more about recovery from long COVID at:

**NHS inform** – [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid)

**NHS inform helpline** - 0800 22 44 88

**Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland** – Available through NHS Inform

**SIGN Long COVID Patient Booklet** - [Long COVID \(sign.ac.uk\)](https://www.sign.ac.uk/long-covid)

# Long Editorial

## Longer- term effects of COVID-19 (long COVID)

### What is long COVID?

Most people's symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) get better within 4 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer, or new ones can develop. This has been referred to as long COVID. Symptoms can also change over time and can affect anywhere in the body  
Contact your GP practice if:

- you're worried about your symptoms
- your symptoms are getting worse

These are the symptoms you should look out for, and ways to help you manage them.

### Common symptoms and how to manage them

You may feel fatigued, which means you have less physical, mental and emotional energy to do daily activities, like talking, moving around or making decisions. Try to break your day into small parts and set easy goals to begin with. Rest between activities and only do what you feel able to do.

You may also get short of breath more easily. This can happen even if you haven't needed treatment in hospital for coronavirus. Breathlessness can feel scary, but there are things you can do to help. Try breathing in before you start to move, then breathing out when you make a big effort, such as bending down, lifting heavy things, or going up stairs.

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# Long Editorial (continued)

Some infections, including coronavirus, can leave us with a dry cough because our lungs have been irritated. Some people may have a cough with phlegm. Make sure you keep yourself well hydrated by drinking small amounts often throughout the day. If you feel yourself starting to cough, take small sips of liquid.

You may experience muscle and joint pain following coronavirus. Try to pace yourself – if your pain is stopping you completing a task you can try again later. It can be hard to relax, but doing something you enjoy will help you feel good and reduce the stress of pain.

It's common to sleep more when your body is fighting an infection. While you're recovering, it's also common to have disturbed sleep patterns. There are things that can help, such as getting ready for bed at the same time each night, avoiding screens for at least two hours before bed, and not having tea or coffee before going to sleep. If you're struggling to drift off, try getting up and relaxing in another room until you feel tired again.

Being unwell can have an impact on your mental health.

You may feel low in mood, have difficulty concentrating or have feelings of worry and panic .

Try to stick to a daily routine, limit alcohol intake and maintain a well-balanced diet. Talk to friends and family about how you are feeling. If your symptoms aren't improving after a couple of weeks, speak to your GP.

## Further information and support

Recovery from coronavirus can take time and varies from person to person. If you're worried about your symptoms, don't struggle alone. Find out more about recovery from long COVID at:

**NHS inform** – [nhsinform.scot/long-covid](https://nhsinform.scot/long-covid)

**NHS inform helpline** - 0800 22 44 88

**Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland** – Available through NHS Inform

**SIGN Long COVID Patient Booklet** - [Long COVID \(sign.ac.uk\)](https://www.sign.ac.uk/long-covid)

# WhatsApp/ Text Message Copy

## WhatsApp/ Text Copy

Short copy has been provided below for communication across WhatsApp or text message channels. This has been included for stakeholders to disseminate to their network, such as patient and/ or community groups.

*Most people's symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) get better within 4 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer, or new ones can develop. This has been referred to as long COVID. Symptoms vary from person to person and can include fatigue, breathlessness, muscle and joint pain, difficulty concentrating or loss of taste or smell.*

*Don't struggle alone. Find out more about recovery from long COVID at **[NHSinform.scot/long-covid](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre/long-covid)** or call NHS 24 on **0800 22 44 88**.*



# Thank you

**For more information please contact:**

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