

How to help patients manage ongoing symptoms.

Patients with Long COVID are looking for answers, as well as continued care and support. Here's how you can assist them.

It may take more than one appointment to diagnose Long COVID.

- There's no single test for Long COVID, and some people may not have a recorded positive COVID-19 test.
- Tell patients you'll check in regularly and monitor their symptoms and energy levels.

Start with conversation and support.

- Your patients know their symptoms may be Long COVID, but it may take time to understand what they are experiencing.
- Not having clear answers can be stressful, especially without a diagnosis. Offer support, listen and help patients feel understood.
- Remind them that symptoms can come and go and may vary from day to day.
- Advise them to seek immediate care if their symptoms get significantly worse.

Suggest ways to manage their symptoms.

You can recommend they:

- Follow a balanced diet and stay hydrated.
- Reduce stressors when it's possible.
- Plan activities based on energy levels. Use the "4 Ps": Prioritize, Plan, Pace, Position.
- Try breathing exercises and gentle physical activity.

Let them know treatment options exist.

- Encourage patients to track their symptoms in a journal, diary or symptoms app to better understand patterns over time.
- Stick to regular follow-up appointments to monitor symptoms and adjust care.
- Cognitive rehabilitation, physical therapy, mental health counseling and group support are available, as are certain medications to address pain and irregular sleep.
- Depending on their symptoms, consider referring your patients to specialists in respiratory, neurological, psychological or cardiovascular care.



Acknowledge the challenges of Long COVID and build trust with your patient

- Listen carefully and ask follow-up questions.
- Believe patients and take their symptoms seriously.
- Recognize and validate their experiences.
- Offer support and encouragement and help guide them through the next steps in care.



Learn more about Long COVID at
doh.wa.gov/long-covid-providers

