

NHS - New guide for people recovering from COVID-19

It's a long road to recovery for many who have contracted COVID-19. In Scotland over 185,000 people have tested positive for the virus, with over 57,000 of these cases recorded within Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

NHSGGC's Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy teams have created a new online resource to help anyone who is recovering from the virus, having distilled what they have learned from helping people recover both at home and in hospital.

The new self-management resource is available to the public and is aimed at anyone managing the many types of symptoms associated with COVID-19. It also notes the pace of recovery may be slower than expected.

Common symptoms can include: fatigue, breathlessness, reduced exercise tolerance and lack of physical strength. The resource offers advice on recovering from the virus, managing breathlessness, general wellbeing, managing fatigue, exercise programmes and more.

Lynn Glen, Physiotherapist, NHSGGC, said: "We know that the lingering effects of COVID-19 can vary from person to person. We've had younger and older patients admitted to wards and intensive care units, some dealing with debilitating fatigue and breathlessness for months after being diagnosed, requiring weeks and months of rehab and physiotherapy input. Other patients may only require physiotherapy input for a shorter period. The length of time recovering from COVID-19 can also vary so we had to find a way to support people at home.

"We wanted to help people get back on their feet, to gain knowledge about the virus, learn how to manage their symptoms and ultimately recover with this new resource."

You can access the new NHSGGC online resource here:

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/health-services/allied-health-professionals-ahps/physiotherapy/>



Lorna Graham, 27, who has been a nurse for three years, was diagnosed with COVID on 8 April 2020 and has not yet fully recovered. She was off work for six months and has since been diagnosed as suffering from Long COVID.

She said: “The acute phase of my illness lasted a few weeks and I can truly say I felt like I was dying. Without question it was the worst I have felt in my life. It’s not that I haven’t been ill before. I have had sepsis and swine flu but this was different. It felt like I was drowning; at times I couldn’t get a breath.

“This all happened despite me being a fit 26 year old. I wasn’t a fitness fanatic, but I was active on my days off. I would go hillwalking regularly, so you could say I was fit and obviously young too.

“In the first few weeks I was at the COVID assessment centre a few times and was sent to hospital, although never admitted. I had a temperature, no taste or smell and just slept and slept.

“I waited to recover fully and it just never came. It was October before I felt able

to go back to work.”

Nearly ten months on, Lorna’s health has yet to recover fully.

Top Ten Tips for Recovering from COVID-19:

1. Take it slow – recovery may take longer than you expect.
2. Eat well – your body needs nutrients to get better. This can be difficult when you lose your sense of taste / smell but just as important.
3. Sleep well – your body needs rest, take it easy.
4. Plan your day – especially important if you’re feeling fatigued. Plan your day and week to include consistent activity, rather than boom and bust cycles which may leave you more tired.
5. Deep breathing – sit in a relaxed position, breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth, lying on your front can also help.
6. Stay active – your physical strength may be impacted so build yourself back up with regular activity like walking or at home exercises.
7. Get up – easy to forget in lockdown, make sure you are regularly standing, set a timer to make sure you’re getting up once an hour.
8. Get out – make sure to get outside with nature proven to improve our wellbeing.
9. Relax – remember to relax your mind however that may be. Some people find meditation helpful.
10. Stay connected – speak to your loved ones regularly about your recovery and how you’re doing. We all need support.

Read more here: <https://www.nhs.uk/about-us/media-centre/news/2021/02/new-guide-for-people-recovering-from-covid-19/>