

Becoming a Self-Manager

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Why is self-management important for long COVID?

Long COVID is a condition with a variety of symptoms. For some people, symptoms may be mild or moderate. For others, the symptoms can be unpredictable, challenging, and often debilitating. How the symptoms present and how severe they are can also change over time. Symptoms can disappear and reappear.

Long COVID is a relatively new condition. Right now, there are no diagnostic tests or treatments specifically for long COVID, although there is ongoing scientific research to better understand and treat this condition. For these reasons, your regular caregivers and health care providers may not be able to offer you a clear and definitive plan for assessing or treating your symptoms, unless they have experience treating people with long COVID.

There are steps you can take to help manage specific symptoms and support your wellbeing. Right now, self-management and rehabilitation are the cornerstone of long COVID care. This includes educational

resources, tools, and self-management strategies. You will find several in this *MyGuide* (see [Road to Recovery](#) section of this *MyGuide* for strategies for different symptoms).



What is involved in self-management?

A self-management approach aims to provide access to education and resources that allow you to:

- Manage symptoms that are highest priority for your overall health and function
- Decide which strategies work best for your lifestyle and values

Many people notice improvements in their symptoms by using self-management strategies.

It is important to note that self-management of long COVID symptoms can be difficult. There is no one single approach that works for everyone. It can feel frustrating at times when something that has helped someone else doesn't work for you. Or what helped you at first is no longer as helpful.

If you don't know where to start, or you need support and guidance, consider seeing a health care professional who is familiar with long COVID to help you on your journey. You may also consider seeking peer support from other people with long COVID. Please see your provincial/territory Resources for how to find a health care provider or peer support group in your area.

The Canadian Guideline for Post COVID-19 Condition (CAN-PCC) [recommends self-management programs \(also called self-care programs\) for people with long COVID](#). Research evidence shows that these programs can provide information and education on how to manage symptoms, which can help improve physical health, mental health, social outcomes, and daily function.

In this *MyGuide*, we offer self-management approach that can be used at the same time as you consider other treatment options with qualified health care providers.

How you can become a self-manager

Becoming a self-manager can be challenging. Changing your behaviours and at times your lifestyle can be difficult.

Self-management tools, like those offered in this My Guide, can help you manage your symptoms and navigate your care.

- [Road to Recovery](#) section offers strategies and tools for managing common symptoms of long COVID.
- [Tools and Worksheets](#) shows examples of ways to track your symptoms, activities, and energy levels. Please feel to adapt these to your needs and preferences.

- [Navigating the Health Care System](#) provides information on what is involved when interacting with health care providers and health care systems.

Your provincial/territory Resources contains links to tools, ways to find health care providers, and information on peer support, other health supports, returning to work, disability claims, and other topics that can help with self-management.

Where to next?

- Review the [Tools and Worksheets](#) and [Navigating the Health Care System](#) topics on *MyGuide*.
- See [Road to Recovery](#) section of this *MyGuide* for strategies for different symptom
- Please review [the recommendation](#) by CAN-PCC on self-care.

