

INTRODUCTION

What is Post-COVID or Long COVID?

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What is Post-COVID or Long COVID?

Post-COVID or long COVID describes a group of symptoms and complications that affect the nervous system after a confirmed or probable COVID-19 infection.*

Common symptoms include brain fog, fatigue, and breathlessness, but there are also other symptoms that are explained in this Guide. In general, symptoms can negatively affect everyday functioning.

Symptoms may occur shortly after the acute COVID illness or may arise weeks or months afterwards.

Long COVID symptoms can increase or decrease in response to activities/effort level, although this may not be the case for everyone right from the start.

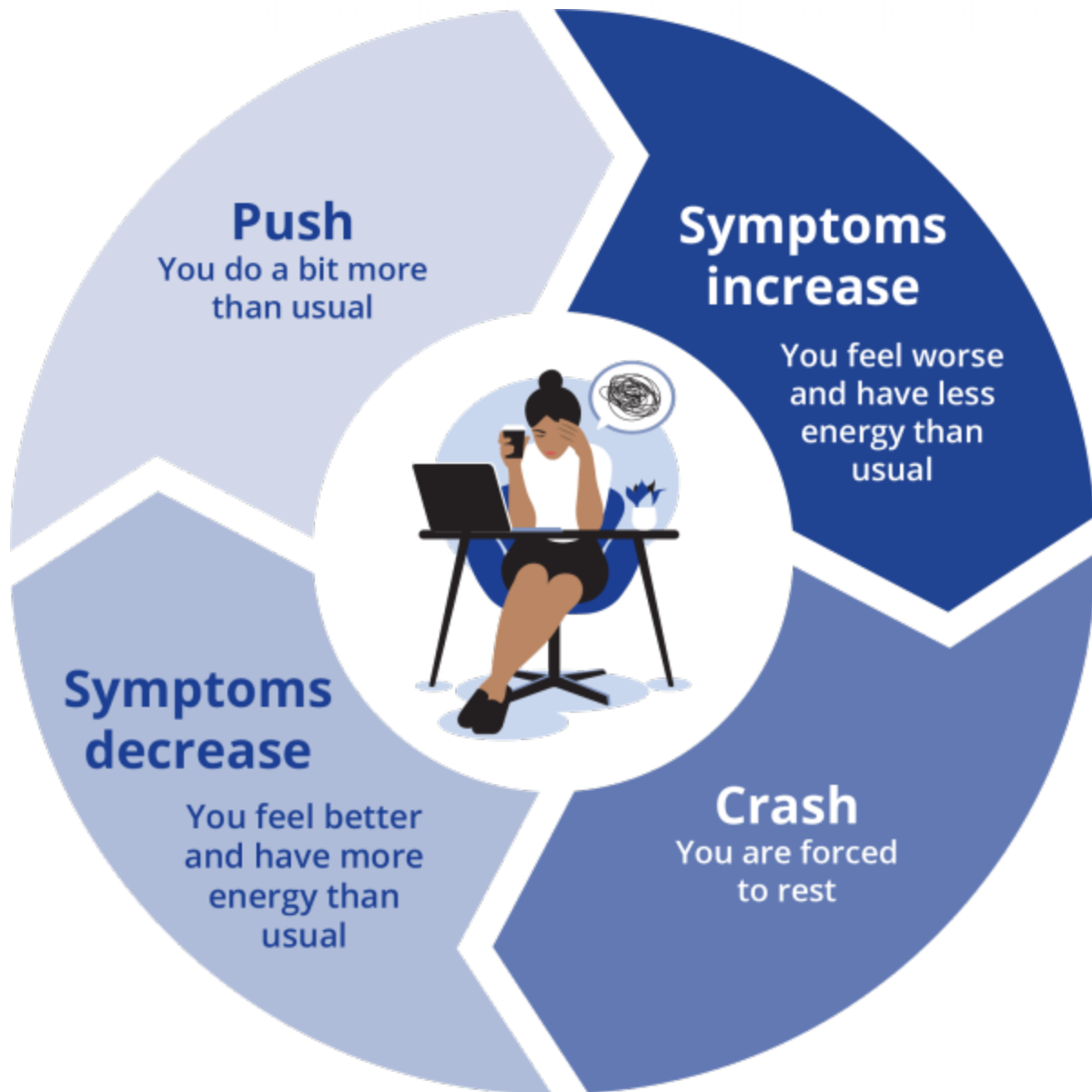
*Adapted from the World Health Organization definition.

What you will notice

Symptoms may increase or decrease in response to activities or effort level, but this might not be the case for everyone right from the start. This connection between symptoms and activities can change over time. Activities can be physical, cognitive/mental, or social/emotional.

Patients of long COVID often experience a push/crash cycle.

For example, they may have a “good day” (less symptoms) and end up doing too much (push) then “pay for it later” (increased symptoms) and be forced to rest to recover (crash).



This “crash” is called **Post-Exertional Malaise (PEM)**.

The level of activity or cognitive effort may not seem like much and the “crash” may not occur until 1 to 3 days afterwards.

This can make it very challenging to find out what activities are increasing symptoms.

Long COVID symptoms

This short 4-minute video describes common long COVID symptoms.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fogPLrZoQc>

What you can do about it

The good news is you can take control over many if not all of your symptoms.

[Pacing](#) has been shown to be the most effective way for patients with long COVID to slowly decrease their symptoms and improve their overall

function over time.

This Guide is organized into different sections to help you with your long COVID symptoms and help you improve your daily living.

- **Symptoms**, such as post-exertional malaise (PEM), fatigue, and brain fog.
- **Strategies**, such as pacing, heart rate monitoring, and breath work.
- **Other** topics, such as becoming a self-manager, returning to work, and finances.

Where to next?

- Learn more about [Post-Exertional Malaise \(PEM\)](#) and [Pacing](#)
- Watch [this video](#) to learn more about common long COVID symptoms

