



## What is Long-Haul COVID?

Long-haul COVID (also called Long-COVID) refers to symptoms that develop, generally, at least four to eight weeks after an initial COVID-19 infection has cleared. They can be new symptoms or reoccurring old ones and can last for weeks or many months. Some researchers have found that people who develop long-haul COVID tend to be younger and initially had very mild or even no symptoms.<sup>1</sup>

### Symptoms

People suffering with long-haul COVID are no longer contagious but still have symptoms of the disease. Some may not have tested positive for COVID-19 because the disease cleared before they developed serious symptoms<sup>2</sup>. Symptoms are often very severe and include extreme fatigue, difficulty thinking or concentrating (sometimes referred to as “brain fog”), shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, muscle pain, depression or anxiety, and more.<sup>3</sup> Many people with these lingering symptoms have difficulty resuming normal activities, like going to work or school or participating in daily household activities.

### Causes

Experts don't know what causes long-COVID but the National Institutes of Health has launched an initiative to discover causes, prevention, and treatment. Clinics are being set up around the country to treat patients and treatments vary depending on symptoms. Washington, Oregon, and Idaho all have long-COVID clinics.

Some researchers estimate about 10% of COVID-19 patients become long haulers, or about 3,300,000 people in the US, currently.<sup>4</sup> But other estimates are higher, such as a recent University of Washington study where approximately 30% of participants reported persistent symptoms up to nine months after their initial illness.<sup>5</sup>

### Protect yourself, your family, and your community

Long-haul COVID is very serious and can affect people of all ages and cases in children are increasing.<sup>6</sup> One researcher has found almost half of children who contract COVID-19 may have lasting symptoms.<sup>7</sup> If you think you might have long-haul COVID, see your doctor to determine the best course of action or treatment for you.

As Indigenous people, it is our role to learn from those who came before us and nurture those who come next. We dance, we pray, we share, we adapt, we protect.

Being vaccinated and having your children vaccinated is the best protection against long-haul COVID!

<sup>1</sup> <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/04/harvard-medical-school-expert-explains-long-covid/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.statnews.com/2020/08/26/long-haulers-dilemma-many-cannot-prove-they-had-covid19/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33273028/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7927578/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2776560>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/families-live-in-fear-as-long-haul-covid-19-afflicts-more-children/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7927578/>