

‘Five months on, my most consistent symptom has been debilitating fatigue. At times, I have only been able to walk short distances’



What is Long Covid?

‘Long Covid’ is a set of disabling symptoms that can occur after the acute infection of Covid19 and can endure for weeks or months and be extremely life-disrupting.

How do I know if I’ve got Long Covid?

In the first instance your GP or other health professional will help you identify if it is Long Covid. There is a broad range of symptoms and not everyone will have the same ones. (Researchers believe Long Covid actually describes a collection of different conditions).

- fatigue, fever, pain, breathlessness, cough
- chest tightness, chest pain, palpitations
- ‘brain fog’, headache, disturbed sleep, dizziness, pins + needles, numbness
- abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhoea, loss of appetite
- pain in joints and muscles
- low mood, anxiety
- tinnitus, ear-ache

When will I get better?

It really is a case of ‘everybody is different’. Most likely the condition will last for a few months and gradually tail off as energy and wellness slowly return. (It is early days and we are learning about this new condition, but the best guides so far are for ‘post-viral syndrome’ and ‘myalgic encephalitis’ / ME.)

Kettering Mind Long Covid Peer support Group

What is Peer Support?

Peer support is when people use their own experiences to help each other. These weekly sessions aim to:

- bring together people with shared experiences of Long Covid, in order to support each other
- provide a space where you feel accepted and understood
- treat everyone's experiences as being equally important
- involve both giving and receiving support.

The group aims to help you maintain good levels of :

Self-care - To keep calm and be more kind to yourself. Learn Mindfulness breathing and/or other relaxation techniques

Mood - To stay connected to others; keep a daily routine; write down reasonable activity goals; stay cautiously active; Resist comparing with ‘what I used to do’; focus on small achievements in the present.

Activity - Avoid ‘boom and bust’ (overdoing it because you feel good then crashing for days). Learn to pace activity – easily manageable chunks, lots of rest breaks, changes of activity;

Relationships - Explain the situation to friends / family and what to expect, but also know how to request sensible help and consideration from others.

Sleep - To manage sleep disruption, ranging from wanting to sleep all day to not being able to sleep much at night. Try to establish a sleep routine of regular hours;

Hydration / Nutrition - good hydration and by paying attention to what you eat can help you maintain or improve your health.

Who can access this group?

This is a service for adults over the age of 18 years old, who live in the borough of Kettering.

How do I refer to this group?

In the first instance contact Kettering Mind Resource Centre team with your enquiry, a peer support referral form will need to be completed. Following receiving the form a member of the Resource Centre team will contact you, to discuss next steps.

If you are in receipt of a personal budget or care package etc. then please speak to your worker to see how attending this group can be included in your support package.

Specialist NHS Long Covid clinics

There are specialist clinics run by Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (Kettering General Hospital) Please contact your GP surgery for information on how to access them.

Contact :

- **Telephone:** 01536 523216
- **Email:** info@ketteringmind.org.uk

Kettering Mind,
49 – 51 Russell Street,
Kettering
Northamptonshire
NN16 0EN

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Long Covid Peer Support Group

Prioritising mental health has never been more critical than it is now. New mental health problems have developed as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.