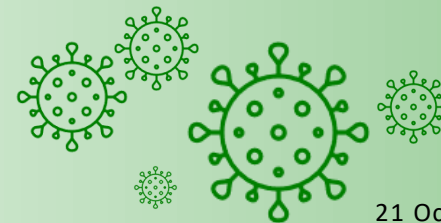




# COVID CORNER

Exploring the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on our lives



21 October 2022

## Long-COVID & mental health

### OCTOBER IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

#### The growing impact of Long-COVID

Long-Covid sufferers continue to experience symptoms of COVID-19 for weeks and months after infection. It is thought to affect 10 to 20 per cent of infections, and can affect nearly every organ system in our bodies – yet there remains no established treatment or cure.

Health researchers are warning that the lingering health problems of Long-COVID could pose a decades-long strain on healthcare services.

#### Long-COVID and mental health

The most common mental health issues reported with Long-COVID include “brain fog”, anxiety, and depression. Some people also suffer symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) like:

- Being easily startled or frightened
- Always being on guard for danger
- Self-destructive behaviour, such as drinking too much or driving too fast
- Trouble sleeping and/or concentrating
- Irritability, angry outbursts or aggressive behaviour
- Overwhelming guilt or shame

#### Recovery from Long-COVID

We are still learning how long this illness lasts, and as it varies between people, it is difficult to predict. It is important to be kind to yourself during recovery and accept that some days will be worse than others.

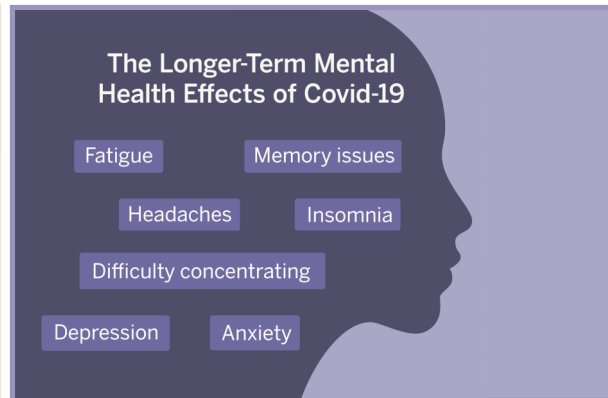
#### Help for Long-COVID sufferers

Unfortunately, there isn't one single treatment or medication to treat Long-Covid. Everyone's experience is different, so it's important to chat to your GP about the symptoms you are experiencing. They can tell you how to best manage them, and link you to other support which is available.

#### Boosting your mood and mental health

You can also take action to support your mental health:

- Connect with other people: keep in touch with family and friends; join a Long-COVID support group
- Maintain your daily routine: good for your mood and sense of stability
- Stay active: exercise releases endorphins and improves your mood



## Fast Facts

- Long-COVID symptoms include mental health issues, particularly “brain fog”, anxiety and depression
- It is important to get support with managing all your Long-COVID symptoms, including mental health
- Join a support group: SADAG has several online COVID-19 and mental health support groups available
- SADAG has a 24 hour toll-free helpline: 0800 456 789

## Want to find out more?

**South African Depression & Anxiety Group:**  
<https://www.sadag.org/>

**NICD Long-COVID overview:**  
<https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/disease-index-covid-19/long-covid/>

**Inside Groote Schuur's Long-COVID clinic:**  
<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2021/05/31/like-a-blanket-of-fatigue-inside-groote-schuurs-long-covid-clinic/>

**Long-COVID effects on mental health:**  
<https://www.openaccessgovernment.org/effects-of-long-covid-mental-health-anxiety/135474/>

## Ask Dr M

### Do you still have questions?

Call us on  
**0800 24 36 72**  
or WhatsApp  
**082 735 4472**



Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 with the two Vs:



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Ventilation

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