

## **Focus on post-acute COVID-19 care (also known as Long COVID-19)**

Long COVID-19 is generally defined as COVID-19-related symptoms that are present for 28 days or more after the onset of acute COVID-19 infection. It remains unclear why some patients experience prolonged recovery. Many patients recover spontaneously with holistic support, rest, symptomatic treatment and a gradual increase in activity.

### **What are some of the symptoms of Long COVID-19?**

The most common clinical features reported in Long COVID-19, present in at least 50% of patients, are:

Fatigue	Fever
Anosmia (Loss of sense of smell)	Headaches
Myalgia (Pain in the muscles)	Anxiety
Persistent cough	

### **When should you seek medical assistance?**

If symptoms don't resolve within six to eight weeks after your COVID-19 diagnosis, please contact your GP or healthcare practitioner.

### **What type of test is your healthcare practitioner likely to request?**

From what we have seen thus far, your healthcare practitioner may want you to go for follow-up testing or examinations, depending on how you are coping with the symptoms or the severity of illness upon diagnosis. Examples of these investigations include:

Blood tests	Lung function tests
Chest x-rays	Scans
Electrocardiogram (ECG)	

### **How is COVID-19 treated?**

If complications arise, these will be assessed and treated as indicated by your healthcare practitioner. The Scheme has developed a basket of care, which begins with an assessment and management by your GP who can then escalate care to a specialist, if required.

### **How do you register for Long COVID-19 treatment?**

Your treating doctor needs to complete the Long COVID-19 treatment request form and send it to us via email at [covidauthorisation@momentum.co.za](mailto:covidauthorisation@momentum.co.za).



To request the form, you or your doctor may contact us via:

- our web chat facility on [momentummedicalscheme.co.za](https://momentummedicalscheme.co.za);
- WhatsApp on **+27 860 11 78 59**;
- email at [member@momentumhealth.co.za](mailto:member@momentumhealth.co.za) (please include your membership number in your email); or
- our call centre on **0860 11 78 59**.

The treatment of Long COVID-19 is subject to pre-authorisation and the appropriate basket of care based on your symptoms. These baskets include consultations, formulary medication, pathology and radiology investigations, as well as physiotherapy on motivation, for a specified period of time. If your symptoms persist after the initial three-month period, you may qualify to register on one of the relevant Chronic Disease Management Programme, if applicable.

### References

1. National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD): Long COVID, March 2021
2. Management of post-acute Covid-19 in primary care – SBMFC