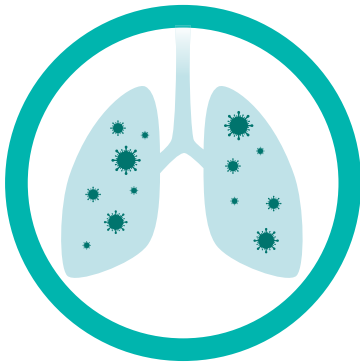




# Your recovery after severe illness with COVID-19



People who have had severe cases of COVID-19 will need rehabilitation to recover from the effects of ventilation/oxygen support, prolonged immobilisation and bed rest. They may be suffering from:



- impaired **lung function**
- severe **muscle weakness**
- joint **stiffness**
- fatigue
- limited **mobility** and ability to do daily tasks
- delirium and other **cognitive impairments**
- difficulty **swallowing** and communicating
- **mental health** disorders and psychosocial support needs



Physiotherapy can play an important role in the rehabilitation of people who have been severely ill with COVID-19 in a hospital or other setting. These people are at risk of encountering (severe) limitations in physical, emotional, cognitive and/or social functioning.

Physiotherapists are crucial in early and ongoing rehabilitation for people recovering from severe COVID-19. They can help with:

It takes time to recover from a severe illness – a physiotherapist will be able to guide you through the process and prioritise the goals that are important to you.

They will work as part of multiprofessional teams to support your needs

- early **mobilisation** and getting moving again
- simple **exercises**
- getting back to the activities of **daily living**
- lung **recovery**
- managing **breathlessness**
- coping with **fatigue**
- finding the balance between being **active** and taking **rest**



A physiotherapist can help you with your ability to exercise, to incorporate physical activity and your return to daily life

#### Post-viral fatigue syndrome

Up to 10% of people recovering from COVID-19 may develop post viral fatigue syndrome (PVFS). If you feel you are not improving, or if activity is making you feel much worse, speak to your physiotherapist or healthcare practitioner and ask them to assess you for PVFS. The rehabilitation of people with PVFS requires different management strategies.



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