

Advice and support for children and young people at our long COVID Hub

East Midlands Long Covid Hub

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Information for Patients & Families

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Introduction

For some people, coronavirus (COVID-19) can cause symptoms that last weeks or months after the infection has gone. This is sometimes called "long COVID". How long it takes to recover from COVID-19 is different for everybody. Many people feel better in a few days or weeks and most will make a full recovery within 12 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer. The chances of having long-term symptoms does not seem to be linked to how ill you are when you first get COVID-19. People who had mild symptoms at first can still have long-term problems.

University of Hospitals Leicester Long COVID Hub for children and young people, opened in September 2021.

While most children and young people will fully recover from symptoms related to COVID within 12 weeks, data has shown that 1 in 7 children and young people may have symptoms linked to the virus 15 weeks later.

Our Hub will assess and manage patients with suspected long/ post COVID directly or refer them into other specialist services. Our Hub includes a multi disciplinary team of

- a paediatrician,
- a physiotherapist,
- an occupational therapist,
- a clinical psychologist.

Together they offer advice and support for children and young people (aged up to 16) and their families, across the East Midlands.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

The multi-disciplinary team

Consultant paediatrician:

Paediatricians look after children and young people with various medical problems. The role of a paediatrician is to make sure there is no underlying medical cause and that your problems are looked at from all points of view.

Sometimes we will have to refer you to other services depending on the individual needs of the child/young person.

Physiotherapy:

Our physiotherapist can provide a patient centred approach to identify the needs of the patient and agree a personalised plan. They offer support, rehabilitation and self-management advice for patients dealing with symptoms such as breathlessness, de-conditioning, fatigue and dizziness and can include specific guidance on pacing, rest and recovery time.

Occupational therapy (OT):

Our occupational therapist will assess your ability to manage your day to day life. They will ask you about your sleep, your every day activities such as washing and dressing, and how you are managing in school including your concentration in lessons.

Some of the symptoms of Long Covid, such as fatigue, sleep difficulties and difficulties concentrating, can make it hard to complete every day activities. OT can find ways to help you manage these symptoms to be able to do things at home and school, as well as activities you enjoy.

Clinical psychology:

Our clinical psychologists can provide an assessment of your psychological well-being and the possible impact of Covid on your mental health. Living with ongoing symptoms of long Covid can be difficult and you may have some anxiety or mood changes, as well as possible changes to your concentration. Clinical psychologists can provide support/ advice for patients managing persistent symptoms and can also provide access into other services that might be helpful.

How to access our Hub

If you have a child or young person you are concerned about, or with persistent symptoms lasting for more than 4 weeks, then please book an appointment with your GP. At the moment we are unable to accept self-referrals.

Possible symptoms include (this list is not exhaustive):

- extreme fatigue
- breathlessness
- pain

Our Hub

- The long/ post Covid Hub sees patients from across the East Midlands. Your initial assessment and investigations will be completed by a paediatrician in your local hospital, who will then refer you to the hub if needed.
- Our long/ post Covid assessment clinic takes place every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1pm.
- Appointments can be face to face with the team at Leicester Royal Infirmary. If you have to travel a long distance, this appointment can be done online via our 'Attend Anywhere' system.
- Before attending your appointment we will ask you to complete a questionnaire called the ISAIRIC. This will help us to understand how you are managing and areas you may be finding difficult.
- Your appointment will last for about 1 hour and as much as possible, the whole team will attend the appointment.
- We will talk through how you have been, the symptoms you are having and any difficulties you are having at home/school etc.
- We will make a plan with you about what would be helpful and what might happen next in your treatment.

Follow-up

- We will offer you a follow-up appointment in the long/ post Covid clinic usually between 6 to 9 months time if needed.
- If you are from Leicestershire follow up physiotherapy and occupational therapy can be offered if this is felt that it would be of benefit to you. This could be virtually or face to face at Leicester Royal Infirmary. If you are out of area we will refer back to your local services.
- Psychology may join these follow-ups if helpful and/or, you may be referred for a more detailed psychological assessment.

Contact details

For any questions or queries please contact the hub in the following ways:

Phone: 0116 258 7684

Email: Anaida.calvert@nhs.net

Post: FAO: Children's Management Office, Windsor, Ground Floor, University Hospitals of Leicester, Leicester Royal Infirmary, Infirmary Square, Leicester LE1 5WW

