

COVID-19 positive – What symptoms can I expect?

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and will recover within 2 weeks. The following is a guide for what to expect.

If at any time you experience shortness of breath when at rest, difficulty breathing or your symptoms become suddenly worse, call 111 for an ambulance immediately. Don't wait.

Timeline of Symptoms

Days 1–3:

Early symptoms of COVID-19 can be very different for different people

- It can start with a tickle in your throat, a cough, fever or headache. You may also feel short of breath or feel a little pressure in your chest.
- Sometimes it begins with a bout of diarrhoea (runny poo).
- You may feel tired and/or may lose your sense of taste and smell.
- You may experience some or none of these symptoms.
- Even if you have a mild COVID-19 infection, avoid running, workouts, weights and high impact activities until you've been cleared by your healthcare team.

Days 4–6:

These are important days to be more aware of your symptoms. This is when lung (respiratory) symptoms may start to get worse, especially for older people and people who have other conditions like high blood pressure, obesity, asthma or diabetes.

- You may start to feel worse and may have aches, chills, cough and an inability to get comfortable.
- Some younger people may develop rashes, including itchy red patches, swelling or blistering on your toes or fingers.

Days 7–8

- For people with mild illness, the worst is generally over after a week.
- Some people may get worse at this point or start to feel better briefly then take a turn for the worse.
- **If you start to feel worse, contact your healthcare team.**



Days 8–12 (week 2):

Continue to monitor your symptoms and record them in your diary.

- You may feel better sleeping on your front/stomach or side (see graphic below)
- If you start to feel worse, contact your healthcare team

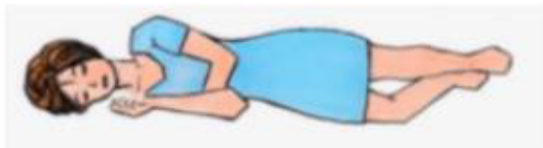
Days 13–14

- Most people will feel better by now. Some people feel more tired than usual.
 - If you have had severe symptoms or needed extra treatment because of low oxygen levels you may still be feeling unwell and very tired. It may take you longer to recover.
 - A slow return to activity is suggested.
 - If you have ongoing severe symptoms, your healthcare team will advise you on what to do.
 - This is why recording your symptoms is so important.
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1. 30 minutes – 2 hours: laying on your belly



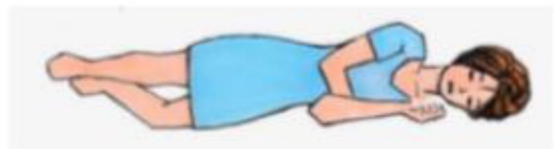
2. 30 minutes – 2 hours: laying on your right side



3. 30 minutes – 2 hours: sitting up



4. 30 minutes – 2 hours: laying on your left side



Then back to Position 1. Lying on your belly!



Image source: Sarah Lin, NYC Health + Hospitals

