

POST COVID ... DO's and DONT's...

- 1) Take good care of yourself with adequate rest. Ensure good quality of adequate sleep to speed up recovery and try to stay in an area that is properly ventilated.
- 2) Do not join your work or indulge in pre COVID lifestyle immediately during recovery especially by the moderate and severely affected persons. Resume your regular activities in a planned phased manner.
- 3) Avoid stress, too much work or anxiety for better and faster recovery. Do not smoke; consume tobacco or alcohol in post COVID phase.
- 4) Eat nutritious food with high proteins like fish, chicken, lentils, legumes, boiled eggs, nuts, seeds etc. Proteins help to accelerate body repair. Eat small portions for better digestion. Eat vegetables and at least 1 fruit per day. Include complex carbohydrates (e.g. ragi, jawar, maize etc.) in your diet as a source of energy. Drink plenty of water. Even juices or coconut water help to maintain hydration.
- 5) Do a few easy exercises. They help to improve blood flow, oxygen circulation and detoxify the body. They produce happiness hormones which help to lift spirits and improve mood, which is a must in post COVID survivors. Try to do whatever exercises one can and whatever one likes, without pushing oneself too much in the beginning. Even 10-15 minutes per day also should suffice. Those with asymptomatic and mild disease may engage in jogging or walking post recovery, if tolerated. Start slow and increase gradually. It is best to wait for 2 to 3 weeks before resuming any workout regime. Do not exercise in hot, humid weather and immediately post meals. Adequate warm up before beginning along

with comfortable clothing and footwear will help in easier workout sessions.

6) Considering brain fog or even memory disturbances in post COVID period which has been observed in a few recovered patients, some simple yet engaging mind games like crossword or puzzles or sudoku will help the patient feel better, improve memory, and can prevent one from getting irritated or excited. Also try to break down activities into individual steps to prevent feeling overwhelmed. Prompt oneself with notes, alerts and lists of to do things for better remembering.

7) Share positive stories of those who have recovered. Always stay connected with loved ones. Relive your hobbies. Avoid too much of news watching or negativity around. Try speaking to friends and family via audio or even video calls.

8) Reorganize things in everyday life as much as possible, so that they require lesser time and energy expenditure. Keep frequently used items at easily accessible sites. Do only extremely essential activities with adequate rest and staggered breaks in between. Plan schedule in advance, and also take days off in a week.

9) Improve balance, coordination and muscle strength. Increased confidence will help to boost energy levels.

10) Monitor oxygen levels with a pulse oximeter at home at rest and also on walking for 6 minutes. Small fluctuations are normal post recovery, but if major drop in levels or if oxygen saturation reaches below 90%, get in touch with your doctor at the earliest. Some patients may need oxygen via cylinders or concentrators for a few weeks during recovery to tackle symptoms of breathlessness or low oxygen levels.



Prepared and Issued in public interest by:
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11) Do deep and slow breathing exercises including a few yoga and meditation sessions to improve concentration and strengthen the lung capacity.

12) Extreme degree of fatigue, tiredness, low energy levels, headaches, loss of taste or smell, anxiety, depression, lack of sleep, difficulty in concentration and memory or sleep disturbances are all seen commonly in post COVID survivors. If chest discomfort, tightness or pain in chest, palpitations or shortness of breath, one should contact the doctor immediately. Similarly prolonged cough, excessive phlegm production or fluctuating oxygen levels should be brought to the attention of the treating doctors.

13) Wear a mask, sanitize hands and avoid crowds with maintenance of 2 metres or 6 feet distance between persons, just like pre COVID period as re-infections and relapses may occur in a few cases.

14) Steam inhalation for short duration, hot water intake, milk with turmeric, warm water or betadine gargles and other local methods like herbal tea, lemon and honey in warm water or decoction (*kadha*) can continue even post recovery. Sleep on one side for better drainage of phlegm instead of sleeping on the back. Ambulate and move around the house to facilitate faster sputum clearance.

15) Do not self medicate or search solutions for any problems online. Contact your doctor for any doubts. Every person who has recovered from COVID has a unique journey, and it differs from person to person. Hence, do not compare your symptoms or time to recovery with others.

16) Treatment for the co-morbid conditions, if any, should continue as before without any interruptions.

17) Symptoms like headache, fever, blocked nose with blackish scabs, facial pain, redness and swelling on one side of face or cheeks, swelling of the eye, decreased vision, cough with bloody phlegm, shortness of breath, abdominal pain or distension, loose stools, bloody vomits etc., if any, should be brought to the notice of the treating doctors for evaluation of black fungus or mucormycosis.

18) COVID-19 vaccine should be taken 3 months (12 weeks) after contracting COVID. It is important to take the vaccine even after infection in order to strengthen the immune system. If one dose was taken prior to COVID infection, delay the second dose by 12 weeks. Being infected with COVID gives limited protection and vaccination is a must.

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