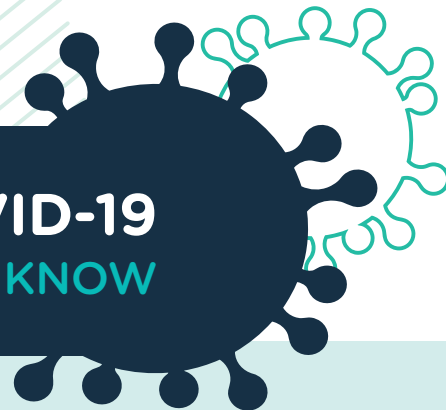


“BRAIN FOG” AND COVID-19

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



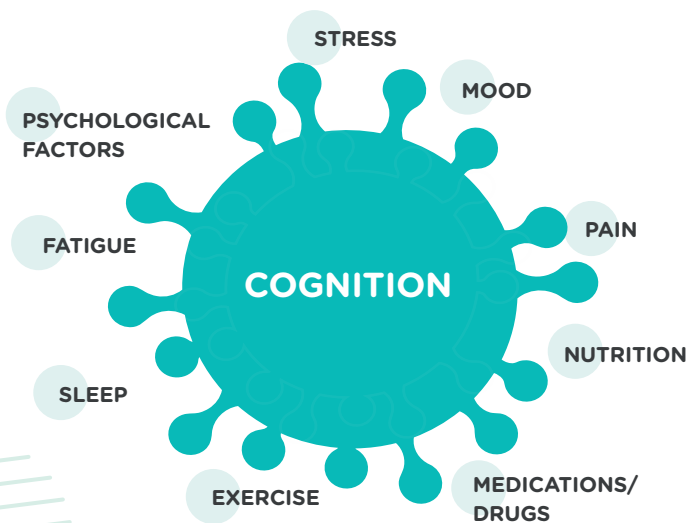
WHAT IS IT?

During COVID-19 recovery, many patients say they experience something called “brain fog.”

Brain fog can take several forms, including:

- Mental fatigue;
- Problems with attention;
- Frequent forgetfulness;
- Memory loss;
- Problems with concentration;
- Thinking in slow motion or not feeling sharp;
- Problems with planning, organizing, and problem-solving.

Many things affect cognition, as shown in this image.



It's important to know that some of these factors can make your symptoms seem more intense or last longer. For example, if you already have learning difficulties or problems sleeping, if you feel more anxious than usual, or if you're in pain, the brain fog may be worse.

However, these factors and symptoms are all connected, so a positive change in one area (e.g., better sleep) can have an effect in other areas or symptoms (e.g., fatigue and problems concentrating). You'll see more benefits when you apply multiple strategies that work together.

GENERAL STRATEGIES

Here are some general ways to help you **manage brain fog**:

1. Use pacing strategies (see *Fatigue and COVID-19* information sheet) to make the best use of your energy throughout the day and week. Pay attention to your sleep;
2. Pay attention to your mood, and give yourself downtime, as needed;
3. Avoid drugs and alcohol;
4. Remind yourself that it's normal to have cognitive slips sometimes;
5. Accept the fact that everyone recovers at their own pace.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

Here are some more detailed tips for **managing brain fog**:

1. Break difficult tasks into smaller steps and write them down;
2. Use a calendar or day planner to keep track of appointments;
3. Set reminders on your phone or other device;
4. Keep your environment tidy;
5. Keep important things like your wallet and keys in the same place;
6. If you are stuck for a word, try thinking of a similar word, or describing the word;
7. Reduce distractions when you are trying to concentrate (e.g., turn off the TV, go to a quiet corner);
8. Focus on one task at a time;
9. Choose a time when you are most alert to take on challenging mental tasks;
10. Ask someone for help if you need it. Don't hesitate to share these information sheets with your family and friends to help them understand what's going on and give you the help you need;
11. Talk to your doctor or a health professional if your brain fog doesn't improve. They can tell you ways to manage your symptoms and refer you to another professional, as needed.



MOST SYMPTOMS OF LONG COVID IMPROVE OVER TIME. BE PATIENT AND KIND TO YOURSELF.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LONG COVID,
VISIT THE CIUSSS DE L'ESTRIE - CHUS WEBSITE:
[SANTEESTRIE.QC.CA/LONG-COVID](https://santeestrie.qc.ca/long-covid)**

SOURCE

CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest

REFERENCE

Post COVID-19 Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network. (2021, 22 mars). Brain Fog in Post COVID-19 Recovery. http://www.phsa.ca/health-info-site/Documents/post_covid-19_brain_fog.pdf

REVISION AND LAYOUT

Service des communications

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