

MYLIFE TOOL

LIVING WITH LONG COVID

EMBRACING
MY BODY

TOOLBOX
BOOK ONE



ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

It can take some time, but you can begin to recognise when you cannot physically or mentally carry on with a task. Or you may need to learn what triggers your symptoms.

Paying attention to what your body is telling you can be challenging and tempting to ignore, but it can help you learn how to live better with long covid.

This booklet will encourage you to think about...

- The coping and pacing strategies you already use
- Taking extra time to complete an activity and how to break it down into smaller parts

Many people with long covid find that their energy levels are affected. You can use different planning and pacing techniques to manage and conserve energy levels but you might not know what techniques you can use or may not recognise ones that you already use.

“Things that you might have planned to do or wanted to do or would like to do, have to get parked”

ABOUT ME

	How long covid affects my body	How long covid affects my mind
My symptoms		
Things that make my symptoms worse		
Things that make my symptoms better		
What I can learn/do next		

MY BODY AND MIND

Paying attention to your symptoms can be challenging, because it can make the symptoms feel stronger and maybe even make you worry more about them.

However, if we choose to ignore our symptoms, then we don't learn what makes them better or worse. This tool encourages you to be curious and mindful about your thoughts or activities (or movements).

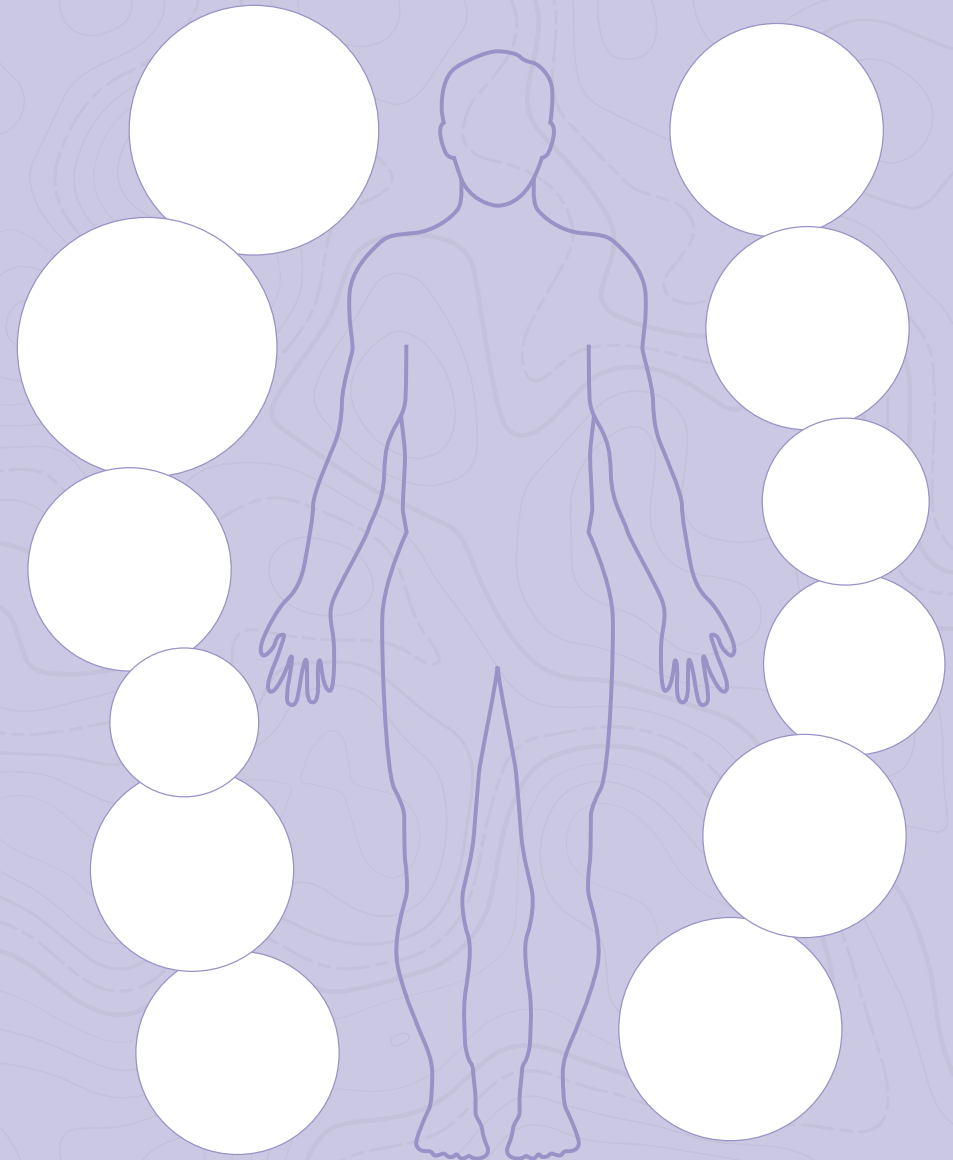
Once you know that, you can think of what to change to make yourself feel better.

Write your symptoms in the head below and the circles opposite and take time to reflect on what helps and what doesn't help with each one.

MY MIND



MY BODY



LOOKING AFTER MY BODY AND MIND

This tool can help you get better at thinking about ways to change the demands on your body and mind in a helpful direction. To help manage your condition you may need to do certain things differently, e.g. do less of some things and more of others.

Reducing demands on my body	
What activities can I stop or delegate?	E.g. are there things you do out of habit that are not essential?
What activities can I reduce/make easier?	E.g. use gadgets to reduce bending down
What activities can I break down into sections?	E.g. hoovering one room per day instead of the whole house
When can I build rest time into my day?	E.g. regular time-outs mid-afternoon
How can I mix activities better?	E.g. change regularly between physical and mental activity
How can I keep enjoyable activities?	E.g. create space for relaxed time with loved ones
How can I take care of my body and minds' needs?	E.g. hot baths or stretching exercises

MY SYMPTOM TRACKER

You could experience a lot of different symptoms - new symptoms can start unexpectedly and symptoms that you have lived with for some time can disappear. It can help to track when these symptoms start and disappear to help reflect on ways to cope with and manage symptoms and to see progress in your journey.

My symptoms are...	This symptom started in...	Has this symptom changed recently and if so, in what way?

SPENDING YOUR ENERGY WISELY

This tool can help you become more aware of how different activities affect your energy levels. It may take some time for you to work out what each activity "costs" you but once you do, you can use this tool to plan your days.

Imagine you have ten energy coins to spend each day on activities to keep the scales balanced.

What activities can you do today to keep the scales balanced?

Activity	No. of Coins
e.g. getting dressed	1 coin

Did you manage to keep the scales balanced?

What does your body feel like when you have spent all of your coins?	What did you do when you had spent all of your coins?
If you kept going on borrowed coins, where did you overspend and why?	What could you do differently next time?

ONE DAY AT A TIME

When we are faced with lots of tasks to work through in a day, it can be easy to charge straight into them and forget to pace ourselves. This tool can help you plan your day.

To make sure you don't try to do too many tasks in one day, it is useful to use this tool with the tool on page 8, "Spending your energy wisely".

What simple tasks can you start with to ease into the day gently?

How can you break down the main tasks for today into easy steps?

When can you take short breaks throughout the day?

What time should you begin to slow down and prepare to finish your tasks for the day?

MY NOTES

Lined writing area with 18 horizontal lines.

MYLIFE TOOL

Developed by



NEURO KEY

An Alliance supporting people
with neurological conditions



Meaning & Purpose

Living with
Long-Term Conditions



**Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives
CC BY-NC-ND**

© Copyright 2023, Teesside University and Neuro Key
(working title of the Tees Valley, Durham and North Yorkshire
Neurological Alliance). Licensed under the Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 license

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

www.mylifetool.co.uk