

Rehabilitative Options for Post-COVID Conditions

A Guide for Providers

How rehabilitation can help

Rehabilitation is a process that helps people optimize their ability to participate in everyday life. It can improve physical function, reduce pain, and help people regain independence after they experience post-COVID conditions (PCC). Rehabilitation can involve a range of interventions, tailored to the specific needs of each patient.



Rehab options

Here's a breakdown of the different rehab options that may be beneficial for patients with PCC.

Rehab option	Description
Physical therapy (PT)	Focuses on restoring physical function, improving mobility and relieving pain. Targets specific body parts and addresses impairments, functional limitations and disabilities. Involves exercise, manual therapy and patient education.
Occupational therapy (OT)	Helps people engage in everyday activities (occupations) and promote overall well-being. Addresses activities of daily living, adaptive equipment, caregiver training and return to work/school. Also focuses on cognitive skills like memory, concentration and planning.
Pulmonary rehabilitation	A multidisciplinary program involving PT, respiratory therapists, and OT. Aims to improve breathing, exercise tolerance and overall quality of life for people with lung conditions. Includes education, exercise training and breathing techniques.
Speech therapy	Addresses speech, language, social communication, cognitive-communication and swallowing disorders.

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Which rehab option is right for my patient?

Choosing the best rehab option for a patient with PCC requires careful consideration of several factors including patient input, the feasibility of rehab goals, accessibility of services and the patient's overall health history. A shared decision-making approach is essential to ensure that the chosen rehab plan aligns with the patient's needs and preferences.



Consider the following symptoms to help you determine the most appropriate rehab option for your patient with PCC:

Symptom	Suggested rehab
Physical limitations due to weakness, pain or stiffness	Physical therapy
Difficulty performing daily activities (bathing, dressing and eating)	Occupational therapy
Cognitive difficulties impacting daily routines or work	Occupational therapy
Shortness of breath that limits exercise tolerance	Pulmonary rehabilitation
Speech, language or swallowing difficulties	Speech therapy

Rehabilitation is an essential component for recovering from PCC, but it is not a standalone treatment.

A comprehensive approach that includes medical management, mental health support and lifestyle modifications is crucial for optimal patient outcomes. By incorporating rehabilitation into your treatment plan, you can empower your patients to regain their independence and improve their quality of life following a COVID-19 infection.