

I had my vaccinations as they became available, by the time I caught covid I'd had 3 vaccinations. I became sick with covid on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and had an uncomfortable 2 weeks with fever, muscle pain, problems breathing, loss of smell, dizziness, headaches and the most horrible thing being the brain fog. I live by myself and was incredibly grateful for the nurses on call and the doctors service that rang to check on me quite a few days, it made the day I started coughing up blood a lot less frightening. It was almost impossible to get an appointment with my doctors' clinic for the first week but the other help was excellent.

After the 13 days I spent in isolation I was still exhausted, having headaches, nausea, dizziness, random swelling around my body and brain fog. I started back at work slowly and have been incredibly lucky that my work has been flexible enough to allow me to work from home and for shorter hours when I need to. I appreciate that I have been very lucky in that regard.

Now nearly 4 months later I am still scared and frustrated. None of the symptoms from after my infection have really settled down. I see my GP regularly and she is monitoring me. At the 12-week mark when it became long covid she put in an application for me to attend a long covid clinic. 3 weeks later I received a letter of acknowledgment and have been advised that I should be sent a date for an appointment in about 90 days. I assume that this means that they are being inundated.

The GP is helping me manage the headaches with anti-inflammatories and stronger pain killers when required and the nausea and dizziness with stemetil when required. Otherwise all the advice I am getting is I just have to be patient and at some point it should start getting better.

I am currently using my sick leave to work 1 hour less every day to try and keep functioning but eventually I am going to run out of sick leave and that worries me. The brain fog still comes and goes and in my mind that is the most terrifying part even more than the exhaustion. Recently I have added allergies into the mix which are the worst they have been in 10 years. At this time I worry about being out of the house for more than a couple of hours or being far from home. Some days the whole thing just makes me cry. I know this isn't sustainable long term and I hope it is going to start getting better soon.