

## Communication

### Useful tips if you're recovering from COVID-19

Communication refers to speech, voice and language. Talking can be more difficult if you are breathless. Your voice might sound weak, quiet, rough or hoarse. You may have a sore throat if you have been coughing a lot of if you needed a breathing tube in hospital.

A good breath is very important in helping us to speak in a clear voice that can be easily heard and understood by others. You may feel that your voice is weak and your speech is not as clear as it used to be. This should improve as your symptoms resolve. You can find more detailed advice on looking after your voice at:

[www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk](http://www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk) > [Voice Care](#) > [Advice for people experiencing voice problems after COVID-19](#)

#### Strategies for looking after your voice and using clear speech

- Sit in an upright position and take a breath before talking
- Speak in shorter sentences
- Reduce background noise when communicating with others
- Avoid shouting or forcing your voice out
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water
- Reduce your caffeine and alcohol intake
- If your voice feels tired, stop, rest and try later



You may also have noticed a change in the way you communicate with people, such as difficulty making sense of things people say to you or following conversations, difficulty putting thoughts or feelings into words, or difficulty reading. These cognitive changes can occur when people are recovering from being very unwell with COVID-19, particularly if they have had to be sedated.

If these difficulties are having an impact on your normal life, or you are concerned about them, and you would like advice from Speech and Language Therapy, then you can ask to be referred to your local Speech and Language Therapy team.

Please ask any member of the team caring for you if you need help understanding this leaflet, or if you need the information provided in an alternative format. This includes translations, large print, Braille, easy read, on audio tape, or via email.