



# KATIE BRINDLE

## Covid-19 Guide

Treatment techniques based in Chinese medicine



# What is Covid-19?

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well-informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently and not touching your face.

The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it's important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow). Please protect yourself with both a mask and glasses because this virus can enter the body via the eyes.

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization.

The most common symptoms are a fever, dry cough, tiredness, headache and a loss of taste and smell. Less common symptoms include aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis, a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes. Serious symptoms include difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure and/or a loss of speech or movement.

Seek immediate medical attention if you have serious symptoms. Always call before visiting your doctor or health facility. People with mild symptoms who are otherwise healthy should manage their symptoms at home.

On average it takes 5–6 days from when someone is infected with the virus for symptoms to show, however, it can take up to 14 days (taken from the World Health Organisation)

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# Steps you can take to help prevent Covid-19

Give yourself the possible chance of prevention. This virus is less active in places that are warm and dry. It's more likely to spread in places that are cold and damp. Therefore, keep warm at home as much as possible and take the steps below to enhance your circulation and increase your metabolism.

## Qigong & Covid-19

Qigong is, quite simply, the ultimate self-healing technique. It's scientifically proven to give you energy, be deeply relaxing, lower heart rate and blood pressure, boost your immunity and relieve pain.

Qigong helps to support the immune system, with research suggesting it may improve both cell-mediated immunity and antibody response in the immune system.

Despite the remarkable benefits, most people are unfamiliar with qigong and don't know where to start. I offer a free daily class on Instagram, where we gather together in a virtual park (i.e. our homes mostly, by an open window) and practice a really lovely 45-minute sequence that is suitable for all levels.

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If a 45-minute class sounds a bit too much, then start even more simply with a single effective Qigong move. Tapping is quite simply one of the best and easiest ways to support your health – and it's suitable for everybody. Tapping is a great way to clear areas of stagnation, boost circulation, support lymphatic drainage and encourage a smooth flow of blood and qi around the body. Using a bamboo tapper has a stronger effect than using your cupped hand or fist, but either will work.

Simply tap all over your body (you can find demo videos on my Instagram page). Tap along your inside leg. This stimulates 2 key organ channels when supporting the body with regard to Covid-19, the spleen and the kidney. Tap all around the knee front and back, and then also along the inner arms, which addresses the lung channel. It's imperative to clear any Qi stagnation and encourage circulation, not only to support your immunity but also to minimise the risk of blood clots, as patients with Coronavirus are at a much higher risk of blood clots. Tapping, qigong and gua sha will all help with this. Spend time tapping your armpits and thymus (in between your breasts).

[View the Qigong Guide](#)

## Wrapping up & Covid-19

Try and keep your body temperature stable, so wrap up now when you leave a warm inside environment.

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# Gua sha & Covid-19

Gua sha is a therapeutic healing technique that has been widely practised in China for thousands of years. It involves using a round-edged tool, traditionally made from materials such as jade or metal, to press-stroke the skin until redness appears. You can even use a jam jar lid! There are lots of instruction videos on my Instagram page. Gua Sha has been used to treat a whole range of conditions from fever to chronic cough and migraines. It has been shown in studies to increase micro-circulation by 400%, and clear inflammation.

You can focus treatment on your inside leg (as above) would be effective, as gua sha has a stronger effect than tapping. Linger around the knee area as there are specific points here that are really helpful. Tapping the Xue Hai (SP-10) On the inside of your leg, above the knee joint. This point is important in the spleen meridian. It is the acupoint which transforms blood into Qi to enhance the spleen. Tap or massage this point on each leg at 9-11 am for 3 mins. Gua sha your throat daily to support lymphatic drainage and keep immunity strong as possible every day. Gua sha your upper back (or rope in someone to do it for you). This will help build back Yang energy.

[View the Gua sha Guide](#)

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# Lungs & Covid-19

Garlic is a popular remedy for helping to boost the immune system. It also expels coldness and relieves coughing. To help support the lungs, mash a few garlic cloves and put them into a container. Inhale deeply to get the smell of garlic into your lungs and exhale. Repeat this for 3-5 mins, three or so times a day. Change the mashed garlic every 3 days.

Nasya Oil is an Ayurvedic treatment which is highly effective in the prevention of airborne infections. You apply a drop of this specially formulated oil infused with antibacterial and antiviral herbs into each nostril and massage the outside of each nostril to spread the oil. This treatment is safe to use on adults and children alike. Burn eucalyptus in a steamer at night.

[View the Lung Guide](#)

# Nutrition and Covid-19

In addition, I would recommend ginger tea, warm food and warm drinks. Tea contains theanine which can provide immune support. Limit smoking, alcohol and spicy, greasy food. I'd also recommend Astragalus Root and Elderberry linctus for immune function.

My Ginger and Liquorice root decoction! There is an IGTV with a recipe on my Instagram, but essentially it is a simple combination of cinnamon twigs, lemon, fresh ginger, liquorice root and tangerine peel in hot water.

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# Bathing and Covid-19

Bathing is a bit of an unsung hero these days. But, if you look hard enough, you can still find hydrotherapy centres, such as the Russian Banyas dotted around Europe. If you are anywhere near London I would highly recommend [www.russianbanya.co.uk](http://www.russianbanya.co.uk)

Most people aren't able to access Hydrotherapy centres, particularly at the moment – but there is a lot you can do in your own bathroom.

Bathing is used the world over to relieve stress, simply because hot water relaxes your muscles. Relaxed muscles send a message to the alarm centres in the brain that there's no threat, thus immediately engaging your parasympathetic nervous system (PNS).

In the bathhouses of China, a specific routine is followed. Twenty minutes soaking in a very hot bath, followed by a cold shower. Rapid changes in temperature strengthen the cardiovascular and immune systems. This is followed by exfoliation, focussing on the groin and armpit regions, which stimulate lymphatic drainage to excrete toxins.

Immediate immersion into a very hot bath is not advisable. Instead, get into a nice warm temp when the bath is about a third full, then increase the temperature slowly as you sit. The steam works to unblock the sinuses and help you breathe more freely.

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As the water temperature rises the sympathetic nerve becomes dominant, and blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugar levels all rise. Then, to correct this condition, the parasympathetic nerve becomes dominant, blood pressure decreases, heart rate goes down, and blood sugar also comes down, allowing the body to repair itself. Heat alleviates pain in the joints and muscles helps to remove lactic acid, salt and urea from the body and facilitates the absorption of oxygen.

Traditionally, different temperatures would be employed depending on your physical health. The more extreme the temperature the more powerful the benefit. If you are in good health that's great. If not, go instead for a gentle fluctuation – this is especially important if you have high or low blood pressure, skin issues, or are pregnant for example.

If you want to wake up and invigorate then finish in cold water, whereas if you want to relax and unwind, you should finish in a hot water. No bath? Foot bathe! Yes, it's a thing - and all you need is a washing-up bowl.

Chinese medicine believes that soaking the feet is an efficient manner of detoxification, as the slightly raised body temperature unblocks energy channels in the body. Simple soaking can be surprisingly effective.

Six meridians (liver, gall bladder, kidney, spleen and stomach) reach the feet, each of which has more than 60 acupuncture points. The feet have points that correspond to many parts and organs of the body. Soaking in hot water activates blood and energy throughout the body. In herbal foot baths, the skin absorbs elements through the skin and these travel through energy channels to target points. Add some fresh ginger to the bowl to supercharge your foot bath.

In addition, keep stress to a minimum as stress exacerbates everything. Try and make some time for meditations, singing bowls or the 5 yin meditations or the free lives on Instagram on @hayoufit.

[View the Immunity Guide](#)

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# Building Back Yang

In Chinese wisdom, Yang energy helps drive the immune system to push out a pathology. Yang is generated at the lower back and disseminated from the neck. By releasing and relaxing the neck and lower back we can support not only our immune function but also our digestion, energy levels and circulation.

The neck is a major meeting point where Qi can be transported through the body as needed. When the neck is stiff and tight there will be less Qi moving to where it is needed. You may well feel run down and stressed. Many of us suffer with tightness around the neck, and regular work in this area can help flow and movement throughout the body. As with the lower back, treating the neck won't treat conditions but will improve the general functioning of the body, so this works as a preventative medicine.

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# Steps to alleviate symptoms if you have Covid-19

If you test positive for Covid-19 and are otherwise healthy, there are certain steps you can take to try and alleviate your symptoms and help your body to fight the virus. Once again, these suggestions are not a cure and should be practised alongside Western medicine rather than replacing it. Please always consult your GP.

This goes without saying, but above all else, REST! Many people “soldier on” in the early stage of illness and that’s absolutely the last thing to do. The most important thing is to give your body the best possible chance to mount an attack. Stay in bed and keep your temperature stable, as the body needs all its strength to wage war with the pathogen. And it’s crucial to get the upper hand against infection as early as possible.

Use a cool, damp cloth to alleviate the heat as it comes out through the forehead. You can also place the cloth on your soft joints – the insides of the elbows and the backs of the knees. There are large blood vessels here, so effective for reducing your overall body temperature.

Keep a window open to ensure fresh air is circulating. And burn eucalyptus oil in a steamer to support your respiratory system.

Keep your fluid intake high, preferably ginger and liquorice tea. Ginger and eucalyptus are both powerful stimulants that open the bronchial passages, warm the body and stimulate sweating. Liquorice supports the digestive system, which is especially relevant to Covid-19.

It’s vital to keep the upper body and the area around the lungs moving. We need lots of rest to help to recover from a virus like this, but sometimes this leads to people being completely immobile, and that lack of mobility then makes it easier for the infection to turn into pneumonia, which is one of the ways that Covid-19 can progress from a minor illness to a very serious one.

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Certain movements from the Twelve Rivers Qigong sequence -specifically Crane Looks Behind and Dragon Clears a Path - are both excellent for maintaining movement through the ribs. And of course, there are other qigong movements that can also target this. If all this feels a bit much, just a simple circle at the waist will do the trick. Alternatively, you can tap to keep the circulation moving if you're bedbound. Gua sha on the chest, upper back and down the insides of the arms from the elbow to the wrist to relieve a cough or other respiratory issues related to Covid-19. Gua sha on the back of the neck and the shoulders to reduce high temperature. Gua sha the top and bottom of the spine to help the body expel any pathogens. Tap all over, focusing on the waist, sides of the waist, down the insides of the legs and also on the thymus gland (between the breasts). Tap or gua sha your Xue Hai (SP-10) point, see above. Press the web between your thumb and index finger. This point is very effective for colds and sore throats since it suppresses pain and activates the immune system.

Lung point 11 and large intestine point 1 are used to relieve sore throats and tonsillitis by clearing heat. Lung 11 is located next to the outer edge of the base of the thumbnail. LI1 is located next to the inner edge of the base of index fingernail. Simply scratch the points with the tip of your nail.

Rub the balls of your thumbs together until warm. Then rub them at the sides of your nostrils. This supports your Lung Qi. Note: avoid tapping and gua sha straight after a meal – and before bathing. Breathwork is recommended in China for Covid-19 patients to reduce breathing difficulties, reduce complications and soothe toxic emotions.(Provided by Covid-19 Rehabilitation Study and Instruction Centre in Tianjin, China)

You could start with my one-minute Rescue Breath a few times a day. Any comfortable position is fine, so lying, sitting, and standing are all fine. We also offer free daily live feeds on breath work on@hayoufit.Ginger, liquorice, Cinnamon twig and tangerine peel tea warm the body and promote a sweat. Liquorice has anti-inflammatory and antitussive qualities, making it useful for sore throat and cough symptoms. Good nutrition is essential. Clear soups and vegetable juices are great remedies and also help to replace lost fluids. Miso soup with spring onion and fresh ginger or chicken broth are highly recommended.

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If you are running a temperature, choose food that is easy to digest (such as rice soup, or millet soup). Avoid greasy food, reduce your dairy intake and add more fresh fruit and vegetables. Greasy food and too much dairy will burden the spleen and stomach. If you are not running a fever, choose high-protein food to enhance the immune system. Eggs, lean meat, warm milk, chicken, fish, chicken soup, bone broth and dark green vegetables for example. The 4 whites (white flour, dairy, processed salt and especially sugar) must be totally eliminated as they will feed the pathogen. You can stick to whole-grain flour in moderation. Green tea has strong antioxidant properties, scavenging the free radicals involved in disease. In China, Covid-19 patients are being prescribed a decoction called Qingfei Paidu Decoction, with a cure rate that can reportedly reach 90%. Depending on your symptoms, the herbal prescription will be slightly

different, so I'd recommend a consultation with an experienced Chinese herbalist. I can recommend Dr Min Li, who you can reach on email -minli718@hotmail.com There is also a highly effective patented Chinese herbal formula I always use for any kind of cold or flu. It's called Yin Qiao San and you can find tablets on Amazon.

I've been taking this homoeopathic remedy which has seen great results for a wide range of people: CV CO + JPV + BACILLINUM in potency 30C in sugar pills. I recommend a 7g bottle. As a prophylactic, take 1 a week. If you are worried about exposure, take 3 a week and then go back to one a week. If you think you have Covid-19 or are living with someone diagnosed or showing symptoms, take 2 a day in the morning and night. Homoeopathic remedies should always be taken 20 min away from food and drink and strong smells like coffee and toothpaste. Best not to touch the pills so you drop one into the lid and then into the mouth.

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# Supporting your organs

In Chinese medicine, we view the body slightly differently to the West. There are some simple rules as to how the body maintains good health:

## Purge and nourish

The body is constantly purging out that which doesn't serve and nourishing in with that which does. This is breath, food, fluids and even thoughts - these are the cornerstones of yang sheng (self-care)

## Free flow of qi and blood

Everything needs to move freely around the body. There is a saying in Chinese medicine that stagnation is death. Whilst that might sound dramatic the point is don't let anything get stuck as it will create an issue. A pain and symptom free body is a body that has smooth flow of qi and blood.

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# The organs are responsible for the health of the body

There are 5 key organ pairings that are responsible for the entire health of the body. These pairings are called the 5 elements. Any symptom you may experience will have its roots in an imbalance in one or more of these organs.

In the case of Covid-19, focus on supporting your Lungs and Spleen to restore balance in the body. I have free guides available for these:

[View the Lung Guide](#)

[View the Stomach and Spleen Guide](#)

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# Steps you can take post Covid-19

Many Covid-19 sufferers recover quickly, but as many as 1 in 20 will experience lasting effects from the disease, known as Long Covid. These symptoms last for 8 weeks or more and include fatigue, protracted loss of taste or smell, respiratory and cardiovascular symptoms and mental health problems.

If this is you, long-term recovery follows many of the same principles as maintaining the immune system in the first place, building from the inside out. The best way to do this is to build up your Kidney Qi. You want to work to strengthen and maintain the kidney essence or Jing. Nourish with Ying Qi (nutritive energy), and then finally strengthen the surface- the Wei Qi. Qigong is relevant to all of these - building up the essence, improving digestion, and circulating the energy so that it can move to the surface.

According to studies done by Covid-19 Rehabilitation Study and instruction Centre in Tianjin, China, patients with long symptoms and recovered patients have weakness in both spleen and lung Qi, and a lack of Zheng qi. So focus on enhancing immunity and strengthening the lungs, stomach and spleen. It is also important to support the Kidneys.

As a rule, the treatment protocol for post-Covid / long Covid patients is the same as that for patients suffering from Covid-19. So, all of the advice in this guide will help to rebalance your body alongside the Western treatments you may be following. My number one piece of advice would be to practice qigong daily. Please, please. My free class is always available, but I'd urge you to try the deeper classes over on [www.hayoufit.com](http://www.hayoufit.com) that have more specific moves to support these organs. Once you learn them, you will be fully equipped for a lifetime of self-practice.

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# Want to know more?

We will be delighted to support you as you continue along your Yang Sheng journey. The following will get you started:

'Yang Sheng: The Art of Chinese Self-Healing' available on Amazon, Waterstone and [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com)

Download Yang Sheng Book

Qigong Healing classes (3 x each week) for a more in-depth and healing practice – full details on [www.hayoufit.com](http://www.hayoufit.com)

Free Masterclass "[Master Your Health](#)" – understand the 3- step plan for preventative health. Find more Qigong Masterclasses [here](#).

Free self-care weekly content [@katiebrindle](#) on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Free regular gua sha demonstrations on [@thehayoumethod](#) Instagram & the opportunity to purchase the accompanying tools from [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com)

## DISCLAIMER:

Please note that any of these Yang Sheng techniques are designed to support your overall self-care and wellbeing and should not be used as a substitute for any Western medical advice or treatment that you may be receiving. You should not use the information in this Guide or on our website for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease and must always consult your doctor if you have any health concerns. Additionally, please note that there are a few contraindications to Yang Sheng techniques, so please visit [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com) to view our comprehensive FAQs.

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