

In the COVID recovery service we are seeing a number of frequent presentations; loss of smell or taste (or altered smell or taste) are both common. Patients often have ongoing (usually improving) symptoms beyond 1 year of acute COVID. We thought it would be helpful to update clinicians on current guidelines around managing these in the presence of COVID infection. Official guidelines were created last year and can be found at: <https://bit.ly/3fk6SpW>

However, since these guidelines were devised it is clear that the symptoms last much longer than 3 months in many patients. On discussion with our local specialist colleagues, the following is now being recommended.

Where there is a loss of smell or taste/altered smell or taste following an acute COVID illness:

- *There is no need for ENT referral*
- *There is no need for imaging*
- *Smell training is probably the most useful to manage*
 - <https://www.fifthsense.org.uk/smell-training/using-what-you-have-at-home/>
 - <https://www.fifthsense.org.uk/smell-training/using-essential-oils/>
- *There is a role for a trial nasal steroids. If trialling is recommend drops such as Flixonase nasules ½ each side in the head upside down position twice a day for 3 months (discontinue if no benefit). Advise the patient this off licence use. The drops in this position have better access to the olfactory area at the top of the nose.*

If you need to contact the team in the service at all our email address is: somccq.longcovid@nhs.net