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facts about older Australians and COVID-19



1

Older adults are more severely affected by COVID-19 infection



Older adults have increased vulnerability to illness and death as a result of COVID-19 infections, including:

- accelerated deterioration of physical and cognitive function
- severe complications of COVID infections
- hypoxia, coagulopathy and organ failure due to the 'cytokine storm'.

3

Technology-based interventions challenge but ultimately empower older adults



Physiotherapists can help older adults with the uptake of telehealth by:

- providing training and virtual support for older adults
- assessing technology needs and recommending suitable devices
- troubleshooting when technology doesn't work
- adapting home-based activity programs for safe use
- helping developers create user-friendly interfaces for older people.

5

Physiotherapists play an important role in managing long COVID in older Australians



Physios can help patients recovering from long COVID to manage symptoms, maintain overall health and avoid falls, through:

- strength and cardiovascular fitness programs
- pulmonary rehabilitation
- pain management techniques
- education, advice and pacing strategies.

2

Flexible service delivery helped older adults remain active and healthy in lockdown

Older adults took advantage of flexible service models offered by physiotherapists, including:

- telehealth and virtual consultations
- online and other self-directed exercise programs
- the use of wearable technology and mobile apps to monitor program adherence
- community outreach programs.



4

Physiotherapy interventions for older Australians were adapted to improve mental, social and psychological wellbeing

Physiotherapists can support the emotional and social wellbeing of older people by:

- making use of available environmental, technological and social support mechanisms
- tailoring programs to fit in with daily routines
- grouping people with similar interests together for exercise programs
- incorporating games, trivia and brainteasers into programs.



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