

## Advice on COVID-19

Click here to read the latest advice.

**This will be updated periodically to reflect the latest advice from government and the NHS.**

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus. The most common symptoms of coronavirus are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature

For most people, coronavirus will be a mild infection.

Please find below, advice on measures you can take to help protect yourself and prevent the spread of infection, what to do if you develop symptoms and where you can get further advice.

We will continue to monitor the situation and advice from the government and health bodies and we will publish updated advice if required.

### General prevention

Public Health England advises that the best form of prevention from catching or spreading the virus is basic, good hygiene and 'social distancing'.

### Their recommendations are:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds;
- always wash your hands when you get home or enter another location;
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available;
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze;
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards;
- avoid close contact with people who have coronavirus symptoms;
- only travel on public transport if you need to;
- work from home, if you can;
- avoid social activities, such as going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and cinema;
- avoid events with large groups of people;
- use phone, online services, or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NHS services.

### Do not:

- touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean;
- have visitors to your home, including friends and family.

A poster showing the most effective handwashing technique is available alongside this advice.

### While this advice applies to everyone, it is particularly important for those people who:

- are 70 or over
- have a long-term condition
- are pregnant
- have a weakened immune system

(The NHS has advised that it will contact individuals who are at high risk starting on Monday, 23 March 2020.)

### **What to do if you (or a member of the household) develop symptoms of Coronavirus infection**

It must be stressed that development of coronavirus symptoms does not mean that you have virus and the vast majority of those who do contract the virus will have only mild symptoms. However, as a precaution, the government has advised that 'self-isolation' should be adopted by anyone who develops coronavirus like symptoms.

You must stay at home if you have either:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature);
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).

**Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.**

**Use the 111 coronavirus service** (this is online)

**Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.**

### **The NHS has advised the following for those who need to self-isolate:**

Staying at home means you should:

- not go to work, school or public areas;
- not use public transport or taxis;
- not have visitors, such as friends and family, in your home;
- not go out to buy food or collect medicine – order them by phone or online, or ask someone else to drop them off at your home.

You can use your garden, if you have one and you can also leave the house to exercise – but stay at least 2 metres away from other people.

**If you have symptoms of coronavirus, you'll need to stay at home for 7 days.**

**If you live with someone who has symptoms, you'll need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms.**

**If you have had the symptoms, after 7 days:**

- if you do not have a high temperature, you do not need to stay at home;
- if you still have a high temperature, stay at home until your temperature returns to normal.

**You do not need to stay at home if you just have a cough after 7 days. A cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.**

**Further advice is available from:**

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>