

COVID-19 (coronavirus)

Common questions

What are the symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus)?

If I have symptoms what should I do?

Do I need to see my GP or be tested before I self-isolate (stay at home)?

What does self-isolation mean?

Should I use a facemask?

Is there any treatment for COVID-19 (coronavirus)?

When should my self-isolation end?

Can I get tested if I think I have COVID-19?

How can I avoid spreading COVID-19?

Do I need to avoid public transport, mass gatherings, church, festivals, concerts or places with crowds?

Is COVID-19 more dangerous for certain groups of people?

Should pregnant women take any special precautions?

If I don't have symptoms can I still visit my relative in a care home/hospital?

What are the symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus)?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of:

- a new persistent cough
- a high temperature

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild infection.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus)?

If you have symptoms, however mild, you should self-isolate (stay at home) for 7 days from the onset of symptoms.

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

Do I need to see my GP or be tested before I self-isolate (stay at home)?

No, but you should contact your GP if:

- your symptoms worsen
- you are no better after 7 days
- you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home

In a medical emergency if you need to call an ambulance you should dial 999, and make sure you say that you have symptoms of COVID-19 infection.

What does self-isolation mean?

You should:

- stay at home
- stay in touch with others over the phone or through social media
- ask friends or family members to bring you things you need such as medication or use delivery services for shopping but make sure these are left outside your home for you to collect
- separate yourself from others with the door closed or stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from people in your home
- stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying conditions as much as possible
- stay in a well-ventilated room with a window that can be opened to keep clean air moving
- sleep alone, if possible
- clean toilets/bathrooms after your use if you share them with others (eg wiping surfaces you have come into contact with every time)
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water
- use separate towels at all times from others in the household

You should not:

- go to work, school or public areas
- go out for a walk unless you have access to your own garden
- use public transport or taxis
- invite visitors into your home
- share towels, bedding or eating utensils and dishes, cups or glasses.

Should I use a facemask?

Facemasks play a very important role in places like hospitals, but there is very little evidence of benefit for members of the public. However, if you receive external care you may be asked to wear a mask to minimise risk to your carer.

Is there any treatment for COVID-19 (coronavirus)?

There is currently no specific treatment for COVID-19.

Antibiotics do not help, as they do not work against viruses.

You should:

- Drink water to keep yourself hydrated – you should drink enough to ensure your urine (pee) is a pale clear colour.
- Use over the counter medications, such as paracetamol to help with some of your symptoms. Make sure you follow manufacturer's instructions and do not exceed the recommended dose.

When should my self-isolation end?

You should remain at home until 7 days after the onset of symptoms.

If you feel better and no longer have a high temperature you can return to your normal routine. Your cough may persist but a cough alone doesn't mean you must self-isolate for more than 7 days.

If you have not improved and haven't already sought medical advice you should call your GP.

Can I get tested if I think I have COVID-19?

Tests for COVID-19 will only be done on those who are admitted to hospital because they are critically ill.

For everyone else with symptoms the advice is to self-isolate (stay at home) for 7 days.

How can I avoid spreading COVID-19?

Do

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- 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
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Do I need to avoid public transport, mass gatherings, church, festivals, concerts or places with crowds?

Most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places. You only need to stay away from public places (self-isolate) if you have a:

- High temperature

And/or

- New persistent cough

Is COVID-19 more dangerous for certain groups of people?

People of all ages can get COVID-19. Older people and people with weakened immune systems or pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) are more likely to become severely ill with the virus.

People of all ages should follow simple measures to stop viruses like coronavirus spreading, for example by washing their hands often with soap and water.

Should pregnant women take any special precautions?

Pregnant women should take the same precautions as others to avoid infection like washing hands often. See the advice [How can I avoid catching or spreading COVID-19?](#)

If I don't have symptoms can I still visit my relative in a care home/hospital?

You should follow the advice in the hospital or care setting you are visiting. People in their care may be at particular risk because of underlying health conditions so they may need to restrict visiting.

Some basic guidelines include

- Check in advance and follow any local information.
- Do not visit if you are unwell yourself.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after visiting and use the hand sanitiser gel provided.
- Ask yourself if your visit is essential.
- One adult visitor per day only, unless in exceptional circumstances and following discussion with the ward sister or equivalent.
- Attend outpatients either alone or only accompanied by one adult.