



Public Health
England



Protecting and improving the nation's health

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

NHS Test and Trace Programme Frequently Asked Questions

Tier 1, 2 and 3 support document

12/06/2020 V6.0

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Document information

Title	NHS Test and Trace Programme Frequently Asked Questions
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Document history

Version	Change made	Reason	Date	Author
3.0	Update on sections to information for contacts. Inclusion of sections to support call handlers	Update to the PHE guidance for contacts of possible and confirmed cases of COVID 19	28/05/2020	Maya Gobin
4.0	Update on guidance for shielded groups Update on use of face mask Change in format and inclusion of hyperlinks to sections Change in guidance about reporting safeguarding concerns	Update in guidance, Feedback from users	05/06/2020	Maya Gobin
5.0	Remove sentence in 3.c – which stated that people can leave to go shopping Updated safeguarding instruction Updated guidance in section 10	Update in guidance and Feedback from users	09/06/2020	Maya Gobin

Scope

This document is designed to support Tier 1,2 and 3 staff working in the contact tracing function of the NHS COVID-19 Test and Trace Programme and covers frequently asked questions by call handlers themselves and by contacts.

Any questions not addressed in this FAQ document should be discussed with your team leader and managed in accordance with the escalation process.

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- How do you know who's getting a test?

Code	Enquiries Subject
01.0	<p data-bbox="225 405 494 439">Clinical concerns</p> <p data-bbox="225 499 710 533">What is coronavirus COVID-19?</p> <p data-bbox="225 551 1372 667">COVID-19 is caused by a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world and cause the common cold.</p> <p data-bbox="225 719 1417 880">These viruses can cause more severe symptoms in those: aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions) under 70 with an underlying health condition (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):</p> <ul data-bbox="225 891 1396 1496" style="list-style-type: none"> • chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as severe asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis • chronic heart disease, such as heart failure • chronic kidney disease • chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis • chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy • diabetes • problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed • a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy • being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above) • those who are pregnant <p data-bbox="225 1543 922 1576">How do you become infected with COVID-19?</p> <p data-bbox="225 1594 1417 1756">COVID-19 infection usually occurs through close contact with a person (less than 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) via cough and sneezes or hand contact. A person can also be infected by touching contaminated surfaces if they do not wash their hands.</p> <p data-bbox="225 1809 805 1843">What are the symptoms of COVID-19?</p> <p data-bbox="225 1861 1391 1939">The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:</p> <ul data-bbox="225 1951 683 2029" style="list-style-type: none"> • a new continuous cough • a high temperature

- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
For most people coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you should be tested and you should stay at home without going out for at least 7 days.

New cough – a cough that you've not had before. For those with a chronic cough, this means that the cough has worsened.

Continuous means coughing for more than an hour on three or more occasions within a 24-hour period.

I have sickness, diarrhoea, runny nose and other symptoms – does this mean I have COVID-19?

Other symptoms have been linked to COVID-19 and this is being monitored closely. These symptoms occur often and are not good for predicting that you have coronavirus.

If you think you have symptoms of COVID-19 you can use the NHS 111 tool to find out what to do: <https://111.nhs.uk/service/COVID-19/>

What do I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?

- **isolate:** as soon as you experience coronavirus symptoms, medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate for at least 7 days. Anyone else in your household must self-isolate for 14 days from when you started having symptoms
- **test:** order a test immediately at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access
- **results:** if your test is positive, you must complete the remainder of your 7-day self-isolation. Anyone in your household must also complete self-isolation for 14 days from when you started having symptoms. If your test is negative, you and other household members no longer need to self-isolate
- **share contacts:** if you test positive for coronavirus, the NHS test and trace service will send you a text or email alert or call you with instructions of how to share details of people with whom you have had close, recent contact and places you have visited. It is important that you respond as soon as possible so that we can give appropriate advice to those who need it. You will be told to do this online via a secure website or you will be called by one of our contract tracers.

Who can be tested?

Everyone who has recent symptoms of COVID-19 including a new continuous cough, a high temperature and a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

	<p>How can I arrange a test?</p> <p>Order a test at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access</p> <p>Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?</p> <p>There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 respiratory disease. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus through good hygiene.</p> <p>What is the risk to the general public?</p> <p>Based on the World Health Organization's declaration that this is a Pandemic; the UK Chief Medical Officers have raised the risk to the public to high.</p> <p>Can humans become infected with COVID-19 from an animal source?</p> <p>The original method of transmission was considered to be animal to human however the data shows human to human transmission is the cause of the spread. Now the focus is delaying human to human spread.</p>
02.0	<p>Virus control and prevention – testing and contact tracing – NHS Test and Trace Programme</p> <p>The NHS Test and Trace Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that anyone who develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus, and also includes targeted asymptomatic testing of NHS and social care staff and care home residents • helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus. <p>How does this service work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if you develop symptoms, you must continue to follow the rules to self-isolate with other members of your household and order a test to find out if you have coronavirus • if you test positive for coronavirus, you must share information promptly about your recent contacts through the NHS test and trace service to help us alert other people who may need to self-isolate • if you have had close recent contact with someone who has coronavirus, you must self-isolate if the NHS test and trace service advises you to do so. <p>What is contact tracing?</p>

	<p>Contact tracing is the process of identifying people who have come into contact with a COVID-19 case while the case was infectious. People identified as 'contacts' who have been assessed as likely to develop infection are then followed up and provided with advice. The purpose of contact tracing is to prevent further spread of COVID-19 and ensure that contacts are aware of what action they should take if they become unwell.</p>
<p>03.0</p> <p>03.a</p>	<p>Virus control and prevention - social distancing and staying at home</p> <p>Staying at home – self-isolating advice for cases of COVID-19</p> <p>Why do CASES have to self-isolate for 7 days not 14 days? This will reduce the risk of you infecting others while you have symptoms.</p> <p>Those who live alone If you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for at least 7 days from when your symptoms started. You may end your self-isolation after 7 days. The 7-day period starts from the day when you first became ill.</p> <p>Those who live with others If living with others, then all household members who remain well may end household-isolation after 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day illness began in the first person to become ill. 14 days is the incubation period for coronavirus; people who remain well after 14 days are unlikely to be infectious.</p> <p>After 7 days, if the first person to become ill feels better and no longer has a high temperature, they can end their isolation and return to their normal routine.</p> <p>If any other family members become unwell during the 14-day household-isolation period, they should follow the same advice i.e. after at least 7 days of their symptoms starting, if they feel better and no longer have a high temperature, they can also end their isolation and return to their normal routine. They can enter and leave the house as normal even if other household members are self-isolating.</p> <p>Should a household member develop coronavirus symptoms late in the 14-day household-isolation period (e.g. on day 13 or day 14) the isolation period does not need to be extended but the person with the new symptoms has to stay at home for at least 7 days.</p>

The 14-day household-isolation period will have greatly reduced the overall amount of infection the rest of the household could pass on, and it is not necessary to re-start 14 days of isolation for the whole household. This will have provided a high level of community protection. Further isolation of members of this household will provide very little additional community protection.

At the end of the 14-day period any family member who has not become unwell can leave household isolation. There is a useful diagram explaining this guidance available [here](#):

If you have a person aged 70 or over living with you

- Minimise as much as possible the time they spend in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas, and keep shared spaces well ventilated.
- Aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible. If they can, they should use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. Make sure they use separate towels from the other people in your house, both for drying themselves after bathing or showering and for hand-hygiene purposes.
- If you do share a toilet and bathroom, it is important that you clean the facilities every time you use them (for example, wiping surfaces you have come into contact with). Another tip is to consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with the older person using the facilities first.
- If you share a kitchen with a person aged 70 or over, avoid using it while they are present. If they can, they should take their meals back to their room to eat. If you have one, use a dishwasher to clean and dry the family's used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them using your usual washing up liquid and warm water and dry them thoroughly. If the person aged 70 or over is using their own crockery and cutlery, remember to use a separate tea towel for drying these.

Advice for the children in the household

Children with coronavirus appear to be less severely affected. It is nevertheless important to do your best to follow this guidance. Children should exercise at home and not go to school or any childcare settings even if they are children of key workers.

Children should also be encouraged to follow good hygiene – frequent handwashing with soap and water and avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Reducing the spread of infection

When you're at home, there are some important habits to get into that can help reduce spread to others in the house:

- Wash your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water or hand sanitiser, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose.
- To reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue away immediately. Then wash your hands or use hand sanitiser straight away.
- Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

How do I treat the symptoms?

Keep hydrated, drink plenty of liquids. You may be able to use over the counter medications to help with some of your symptoms. Use these according to the instructions on the packet/label and do not exceed the recommended dose. Contact NHS 111 if you have any medical concerns.

Do I call an ambulance if I become seriously ill?

Seek prompt medical attention if your symptoms get worse. For non-emergencies, you should call NHS 111. If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that you have coronavirus (COVID-19).

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR HOUSE TO GO TO YOUR GP OR HOSPITAL UNLESS YOU ARE SPECIFICALLY ADVISED.

Ending self-isolation

After 7 days, if the first person to become ill feels better and no longer has a high temperature, they can end their isolation but must follow the government guidance in section 3.0 **Virus control and prevention - social distancing and staying at home**. If any other family members become unwell during the 14-day household-isolation period, they should follow the same advice i.e. after at least 7 days of their symptoms starting, if they feel better and no longer have a high temperature, they can also end their isolation and return to their normal routine. They can enter and leave the house as normal even if other household members are self-isolating.

If you or someone you live with has not had any signs of improvement and has not already received medical advice, you should contact [NHS 111 online](#) or call NHS 111 before you leave your home. A cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone

	does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days. Persistence refers to residual symptoms following infection.
03.b	<p>Staying at home – guidance for contacts of people with possible or confirmed COVID-19 who DO NOT live with the person</p> <p>Contacts of a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) must self-isolate at home because they are at risk of developing symptoms themselves in the next 14 days and could spread the virus to others before the symptoms begin.</p> <p>If you are a contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), then you will be notified by the NHS Test and Trace service via text message, email or phone.</p> <p>If you have not been notified that you are a contact, this means you do not need to self-isolate and should follow the general guidance, for example, social distancing, hand-washing, and covering coughs and sneezes.</p> <p>Who is a ‘contact’?</p> <p>A contact includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 2. sexual partners 3. a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. being coughed on b. having a face-to-face conversation within one metre c. having skin-to-skin physical contact, or d. contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact 4. a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes 5. a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 6. Where an interaction between 2 people has taken place through a Perspex (or equivalent) screen, this would not be considered sufficient contact, provided that there has been no other contact such as any of those indicated above. <p>What do I have to do if I’m contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service and told that I’m a contact of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19?</p>

If you have been informed that you are a contact of a person who has had a positive test result for coronavirus (COVID-19), medical advice is clear: you must immediately self-isolate at home for 14 days from the date of your last contact with them. You are at risk of developing COVID-19 for the next 14 days. Since we now know that people can become infectious up to 2 days before symptoms begin, you could spread the disease to others if you do not go into self-isolation.

Even if you never develop symptoms, you can still be infected and pass the virus on without knowing it:

You need to:

1. Stay at home for 14 days and follow the self-isolation guidance.
2. You must not go outside even to buy food or other essentials, and any exercise must be taken within your home.
3. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transport or taxis.
4. If you do not have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), other people in your household do not need to self-isolate at home with you.
5. Take steps to reduce the possible spread of infection in your home: for example, wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds, using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser.
6. If anyone you live with is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable stay away from them as much as possible, following the guidance here. For the clinically extremely vulnerable, follow the **shielding guidance**.

Why do CONTACTS have to stay at home for 14 days (self-isolate)?

You have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This means that it is possible that you could develop infection within 14 days of this close contact. Further information can be found in the Guidance for contacts of people with possible or confirmed COVID-19 at www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Do other members of my household need to isolate?

Your household does not need to self-isolate with you if you do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but they should take extra care to follow the guidance on social distancing, handwashing and respiratory hygiene.

Do I need to be tested for COVID-19?

You should not arrange for testing unless you develop symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). The most important symptoms are: a new continuous cough, a high temperature, a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

What do I do if I develop symptoms of COVID-19 during this 14 day period?

If you develop symptoms you must stay isolating at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) to arrange or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access.

As soon as you start having symptoms, the rest of your household must isolate and follow the advice in **Section 03.a**

If your test is negative, then you must still complete the full 14 days of self-isolation, as you could still develop COVID-19.

What if someone in my household develops symptoms of COVID-19 during this 14 day period?

If someone you live with develops symptoms, then the clear medical advice is that they must self-isolate at home along with all the other people who live with them; this will include you.

They will need to arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19 – visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) to arrange or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access.

I think I have been in close contact with someone who is being tested for COVID-19, but they do not yet have a test result. What should I do?

At this stage, you do not need to self-isolate. You should take extra care in practicing social distancing and good hand and respiratory hygiene. Contacts of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 infection who need to self-isolate will be notified accordingly by the NHS Test and Trace service. If you have not been notified, this means you do not need to self-isolate.

What do I need to do if I develop symptoms of COVID-19 after the 14 day period of isolation has ended?

If after 14 days of self-isolation you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you must immediately self-isolate again and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-

	<p>19 – visit NHS.UK to arrange or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access.</p> <p>I previously tested positive for COVID-19 but have now been told I am a contact of someone who has the virus, do I still need to isolate again?</p> <p>Self-isolating at home for 14 days is very important even if you have previously tested positive for COVID-19. You will probably have developed some short-term immunity, but it is not certain that will happen for everyone who has had COVID-19.</p> <p>If you are notified that you are a contact of someone who has had a positive test result for COVID-19, you must immediately self-isolate for 14 days.</p> <p>If you start to have symptoms of COVID-19, you should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – visit NHS.UK or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access. You must follow the Stay at Home: Guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19).</p>
03.c	<p>Staying at home – Food, medicines and supplies</p> <p>How do I get food?</p> <p>If you are self-isolating with symptoms of COVID-19 you will need to ask friends or relatives if you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication. Alternatively, you can order by phone or online. Make sure you tell delivery drivers to leave items outside for collection if you order online. The delivery driver should not come into your home.</p> <p>Shall I aim to get all my food delivered to my house?</p> <p>The Government is working closely with supermarkets to help them meet the demand for online deliveries and with local authorities to deliver essential items to those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.</p> <p>I am unable to access online shopping, what do I do?</p> <p>If you do not have anyone who can help you to get the things you need for your stay at home, you should contact your Local Authority as they may be able to help.</p> <p>How do I get medication or other medical supplies like a thermometer?</p> <p>Do I need to stockpile my prescription/medication?</p>

	<p>You should ensure you have enough medication for 14 days if you are self-isolating. Ask friends or family members to collect these for you or make arrangements through a medicine delivery service. If you are self-isolating or are in one of the vulnerable or shielded groups; ask friends, family members or delivery services to carry out errands for you. Remember you can help to protect them and yourself by not inviting them in and asking them to leave essentials outside the door for you.</p> <p>I don't have friends or family nearby, what can I do?</p> <p>If you do not have anyone who can help you to get the things you need for your stay at home, you should contact your Local Authority as they may be able to help. Contact details will be on your Local Authority website.</p>
03.d	<p>Staying at home – other health and well-being concerns (including pregnancy and routine medical appointments)</p> <p>Can I go to my GP, my dentist or another medical appointment?</p> <p>All routine medical and dental appointments should usually be cancelled while you and the family are self-isolating. If you are concerned or have been asked to attend in person within the period you are home isolating, discuss this with your medical contact first (for example, your GP or dentist, local hospital or outpatient service), using the number they have provided.</p> <p>Seek prompt medical attention if your illness or the illness of someone in your household is worsening. If it's not an emergency, contact the NHS 111 online coronavirus (COVID-19) service. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. If it is a medical emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that you or your relative have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.</p> <p>What if my child becomes unwell with something else and they need to see a doctor?</p> <p>Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself. Whilst it is extremely important to follow Government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done. The following poster issued by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) has some advice to help:</p>

www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/covid19_advice_for_parents_when_child_unwell_or_injured_poster.pdf

General pregnancy information:

If you're pregnant and worried about coronavirus, you can get [advice about coronavirus and pregnancy from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#).

Pregnant women do not appear to be more likely to contract COVID -19 than the rest of the population. This is a very new virus, the effects of which are being monitored. There is no evidence to suggest an increased risk of miscarriage.

Given current evidence, it is considered unlikely that if you have the virus it would cause problems with your baby's development, and none have been observed currently. If you have concerns about the wellbeing of yourself or your unborn baby during a self-isolation period, contact your midwife or, out-of-hours, your maternity team. They will provide further advice, including whether you need to attend hospital. Pregnant women who are self-isolating are advised not to attend maternity triage units or A&E unless in need of urgent pregnancy or medical care.

Why are pregnant women in a vulnerable group?

Pregnant women were placed in a vulnerable group by the Chief Medical Officer on 16th March. This means you have been advised to reduce social contact through social distancing measures.

Based on the evidence we have so far, pregnant women are still no more likely to contract coronavirus than the general population. What we do know is that pregnancy in a small proportion of women can alter how your body handles severe viral infections. This is something that midwives and obstetricians have known for many years and are used to dealing with. As yet, there is no evidence that pregnant women who get coronavirus are more at risk of serious complications than any other healthy individuals. What has driven the decisions made by officials to place pregnant women in the vulnerable category is caution. We know that some viral infections are worse in pregnant women. At the moment, there's no evidence that this is the case for coronavirus infection, but the amount of evidence available is still quite limited.

Should I attend my antenatal and postnatal appointments?

	<p>You should contact your midwife or antenatal clinic to inform them that you are currently in self-isolation for possible/confirmed coronavirus and ask for advice on going to routine antenatal appointments.</p> <p>It is likely that routine antenatal appointments will be delayed until isolation ends. If your midwife or doctor advises that your appointment cannot wait, the necessary arrangements will be made for you to be seen. For example, you may be asked to attend at a different time, or in a different clinic, to protect others.</p> <p>What if I go into labour?</p> <p>All pregnant women should be encouraged to call the maternity unit for advice in early labour. If you have mild COVID-19 symptoms, are self-isolating and think you are in labour, call your maternity unit or midwife and tell them that you have symptoms and they will advise on what you should do next. If you have mild symptoms, you will be encouraged to remain at home (self-isolating) in early labour, as per standard practice.</p> <p>If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms or condition gets worse then call your maternity team or NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999. As a precautionary approach, pregnant women with suspected or confirmed coronavirus when they go into labour, are being advised to attend an obstetric unit for birth, where the baby can be monitored using continuous electronic foetal monitoring, and your oxygen levels can be monitored hourly. It is not currently recommended that you give birth at home or in a midwife led unit.</p>
03.e	<p>Staying at home – mental health support for adults and children</p> <p>I'm having a mental health crisis and I feel like I can't cope anymore, please help.</p> <p>The added stress of the current situation could have a big impact on your mental health. You may feel that you are having a mental health crisis as you no longer feel able to cope or be in control of your situation. You might experience great emotional distress or anxiety, feel that you cannot cope with day-to-day life or work, think about self-harm or even suicide, or experience or hear voices (hallucinations).</p> <p>If you are in this situation you should get immediate expert assessment and advice to identify the best course of action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ if you have already been given a Crisis Line number from a health professional, please call it ▪ if you're under the care of a mental health team and have a specific care plan that states who to contact when you need urgent care, follow this plan

- Mind also provides information about how to [plan for a crisis](#)
- [Samaritans](#) has a free to call service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, if you want to talk to someone in confidence. Call them on 116 123
- find [local crisis support services](#) near you that can support you
- in a medical emergency, [call 999](#) if you are seriously ill or injured and your life is at risk. A mental health emergency should be taken as seriously as a physical health emergency

See further advice from the NHS on [dealing with a mental health crisis](#).

Social distancing is affecting my mental health- what can I do?

- The coronavirus (COVID19) outbreak is going to have an impact on everyone's daily lives, as the Government and the NHS take necessary steps to manage the outbreak, reduce transmission and treat those who need medical attention.
- It may be difficult, but by following guidance on **social distancing**, or **staying at home**, you are helping to protect yourself, your family, the NHS and your community.
- Try and think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family via telephone, video calls or social media instead of meeting in person – whether it's people you normally see often or connecting with old friends.
- There are also people you can speak to via **NHS recommended helplines or you could find support groups online to connect with**.

There are other things you can do to look after your mental health whilst you are staying at home, or further support is available if you need it – PHE's **Every Mind Matters campaign provides simple tips and advice on what you can do and where to get further support. **Self Help guide****

- **Consider how to connect with others:** Think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family via telephone, video calls or social media instead of meeting in person.
- **Help and support others:** Think about how you could help those around you – it could make a big difference to them and can make you feel better too.
- **Talk about your worries:** If you don't feel able to do that, there are people you can speak to via **NHS recommended helplines** or you could find support groups online to connect with.
- **Look after your physical wellbeing:** Your physical health has a big impact on how you are feeling emotionally and mentally. Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, drink enough water, exercise inside where possible and outside once a day, and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs. If you are able to go outside,

consider walking or gardening (keeping the recommended 2 metres from others). You can find free easy **10 minute work outs** from Public Health England or other exercise videos to try at home on the **NHS Fitness Studio**.

- **Look after your sleep:** Feeling anxious or worried can make it harder to get a good night's sleep. Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how you feel mentally and physically, so it's important to get enough. Try to maintain regular sleeping patterns and keep good sleep hygiene practices – like avoiding screens before bed, cutting back on caffeine and creating a restful environment. The **Every Mind Matters sleep page** provides practical advice on how to improve your sleep.
- **Try to manage difficult feelings:** focus on the things you can control, including where you get information from and actions to make yourself feel better prepared. It is okay to acknowledge some things that are outside of your control right now but repetitive thoughts about the situation which lead you to feel anxious or overwhelmed are not helpful. The **Every Mind Matters page on anxiety** and NHS **mental wellbeing audio guides** provide further information on how to manage anxiety.
- **Manage your media and information intake:** 24-hour news and constant social media updates can make you more worried. If it is affecting you, try to limit the time you spend watching, reading, or listening to media coverage of the outbreak. It may help to only check the news at set times or limiting to a couple of checks a day.
- **Get the facts:** Gather high-quality information that will help you to accurately determine your own or other people's risk of contracting coronavirus (COVID-19) so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as **GOV.UK**, or the **NHS website**, and fact check information that you get from newsfeeds, social media or from other people.
- Think about how possibly inaccurate information could affect others too. Try not to share information without fact-checking against credible sources.
- **Think about your new daily routine:** Life is changing for us all for a while. Whether you are staying at home or social distancing, you are likely to see some disruption to your normal routine.
- **Think about how you can adapt and create positive new routines** – try to engage in useful activities (such as cleaning, cooking or exercise) or meaningful activities (such as reading or calling a friend). You might find it helpful to write a plan for your day or your week.
- **Do things you enjoy:** When you are anxious, lonely or low you may do things that you usually enjoy less often, or not at all. Focusing on your favourite hobby, learning something new or simply taking time to relax indoors should give you some relief from anxious thoughts and feelings and can boost your mood.
- If you can't do the things you normally enjoy because you are staying at home, try to think about how you could adapt them, or try something new. There are lots of free tutorials and courses online and people are coming up with

innovative online solutions like online pub quizzes and streamed live music concerts.

- **Set goals:** Setting goals and achieving them gives a sense of control and purpose – think about things you want or need to do that you can still do at home. It could be watching a film, reading a book or learning something online.
- **Keep your mind active:** Read, write, play games, do crossword puzzles, sudokus, jigsaws or drawing and painting. Find something that works for you.
- **Take time to relax and focus on the present:** This can help with difficult emotions, worries about the future, and can improve wellbeing. Relaxation techniques can also help some people to deal with feelings of anxiety. For useful resources see [Every Mind Matters](#) and [NHS' mindfulness page](#).
- **If you can, once a day get outside, or bring nature in:** Spending time in green spaces can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing. If you can't get outside much you can try to still get these positive effects by spending time with the windows open to let in fresh air, arranging space to sit and see a nice view (if possible) and get some natural sunlight, or get out into the garden if you can.

How will I be able to access my current treatment and support whilst social distancing?

It is important that you continue accessing treatment and support where possible. Let relevant services know that you are staying at home and work out how to continue receiving support during this time. If you are already receiving mental health care, contact your mental health team to discuss how care will continue, and to update safety/care plans.

How do I manage the physical symptoms triggered by stress and anxiety?

It is quite common to experience short-lived physical symptoms when your mood is low or anxious, for example:

- faster, irregular or more noticeable heartbeat
- feeling lightheaded and dizzy
- headaches
- chest pains or loss of appetite

If this happens, try to distract yourself. When you feel less anxious, see if you still have the symptoms that worried you. If you are still concerned, then visit the [NHS website](#).

See advice from the NHS on [managing the physical symptoms of anxiety](#). If you are experiencing stress, feelings of anxiety or low mood, you can use the [NHS mental health and wellbeing advice website](#) for self-assessment, audio guides and practical

tools [Every Mind Matters](#) also provides simple tips and advice to start taking better care of your mental health.

I am isolating / shielding at home alone and feeling very lonely

We know that staying at home for a prolonged period of time can be difficult, frustrating and lonely and that you may feel low. It's important to remember to take care of your mind as well as your body and to get support when you need it. Developing a new routine can help. Try to stay in touch with family and friends over the phone or on social media. Think about things you can do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period of staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning, catching up with chores they've been meaning to do for ages and watching films. If you feel well enough, you can do light exercise within your home or garden if you have access to one. (refer to self help guide for further advice). There are also sources of support and information that can help, including Every Mind Matters which has information especially to help people who are staying at home: www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/.

I am experiencing difficult feelings or behaviours to do with hygiene, washing or fears of infection, what can I do?

Some mental health problems can cause difficult feelings or behaviours to do with washing or hygiene. If you experience this, you might find it hard to hear advice about washing your hands. It is important to follow government advice on helping to avoid the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), but if you find you are going beyond the recommendations, if this is making you feel stressed or anxious, or if you are having intrusive thoughts here are some things you could try:

- don't keep re-reading the same advice if this is unhelpful for you
- let other people know you're struggling, for example, you could ask them not to discuss the news with you
- breathing exercises can help you cope and feel more in control. You can find a [simple breathing exercise on the NHS website](#) and Mind's pages on [relaxation](#) have some relaxation tips and exercises you can try
- set limits, like washing your hands for the recommended 20 seconds
- plan something to do after washing your hands, which could help distract you and change your focus
- it could also help to read some of Mind's tips in their information on [obsessive compulsive disorder \(OCD\)](#)

How can I manage my panic and anxiety whilst staying at home? How can I manage feelings of being trapped or claustrophobia whilst having to stay at home?

You are probably spending more time than usual at home so try to get outside if you can, once a day. You could also open the windows to let in fresh air, find a place to sit with a view outside, or sit on your doorstep or in your garden if you have one. It can also help to regularly change the rooms you spend time in (if possible). This can help to give you a sense of space.

Since I have been staying at home more, I have struggled with my alcohol consumption

If you usually drink heavily and you are reducing your drinking, remember it can be dangerous to stop too quickly without proper support. If you have physical withdrawal symptoms (like shaking, sweating or feeling anxious until you have your first drink of the day) you should seek medical advice. For further advice available in your area (including remote services) see [NHS advice](#).

I'm elderly and the idea of shielding is really worrying me. Can you help?

[Government guidance](#) is that older people are at increased risk of severe illness and need to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures and staying at home. It is understandable that older people, particularly those with pre-existing medical conditions, feel concerned or affected by changes you have to make to your daily life. It is important during this time to look after your mental health. Stay connected and draw on support you might have through your friends, family and other networks. Try to stay in touch with those around you, this might be over the phone, by post, or online. There is also practical help available for you. Please see **FAQ 12.0**. If you need help but you're not sure who to contact, [Age UK runs an advice line](#) (0800 678 1602 – lines are open every day, 8am to 7pm) that can put you in touch with local services.

Alzheimer's Society has published [information on coronavirus for people affected by dementia](#). If you are still feeling worried and want more help you can call the [Alzheimer's Society Helpline](#) on 0300 222 11 22. You can also speak to a dementia specialist Admiral Nurse on [Dementia UK's Helpline](#), on 0800 888 6687.

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Staying at home – those who are experiencing domestic abuse

I feel I am at risk of or I am experiencing domestic abuse, what can I do?

	<p>Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation, no matter what stresses you or those around you are under. The household isolation instruction as a result of COVID-19 does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse. If you feel that you are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is a range of help and support available to you. If you are in immediate danger, please call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls during this time. If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and then press 55. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without you having to speak.</p> <p>The National Domestic Abuse Helpline website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. They can also be called, for free and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Women's Aid has provided additional advice specifically designed for the current coronavirus outbreak, including a live chat service.</p> <p>The Men's Advice Line is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and those supporting them. It can be contacted on 0808 801 0327. For members of the LGBT+ community, Galop runs a specialist helpline on 0800 999 5428 or email help@galop.org.uk.</p> <p>For further advice and guidance on domestic abuse please see Coronavirus (COVID-19): support for victims of domestic abuse and Domestic abuse: how to get help</p>
03.g	<p>Staying at home - those who are homeless and rough sleepers</p> <p>Many people who are sleeping rough will find it difficult to follow Government advice on self-isolation or shielding. The Government is finalising a strategy to identify appropriate temporary accommodation for those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping that will allow them to follow social distancing advice and self-isolate if needed e.g. local hotels or appropriate hostel accommodation with their own room and bathroom facilities.</p> <p>If you are rough sleeping in England or Wales and over 18 years of age you can refer yourself to the National Rough Sleeper Referral Service called StreetLink by calling on 0300 500 094. You will need to tell StreetLink the location where you are sleeping/bedded down. StreetLink is a way of a connecting people who are rough sleeping to the appropriate local authority services. It is run in partnership between Homeless Link and St. Mungo's, and is funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Greater London Authority. If you need accommodation urgently please contact your Local Authority who will be able to talk through your options.</p>

04.0	<p>Virus control and prevention - decontamination (healthcare and non-healthcare settings)</p> <p>Cleaning of shared spaces</p> <p>Direct all enquirers to the online Covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings guidance. The guidance describes the cleaning required, the appropriate disposal of materials, the disinfection of equipment and hard surfaces, and the personal protective equipment (PPE) that should be worn.</p> <p>Public areas where an individual with symptoms has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned as directed by any existing workplace risk assessment or manufacturer's instructions on the safe use of their cleaning products.</p> <p>All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including:</p> <p>objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells.</p>
05.0	<p>Virus control and prevention - health hygiene (eg face masks)</p> <p>How can I help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses?</p> <p>There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, there are general principles you can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds: • After using the toilet • After sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose • Before handling or eating any food, including snacks • Before cooking • After taking public transport • On return to home from school, work or other settings <p>If soap and water are not available use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. Alcohol hand sanitisers can be bought in most pharmacies, supermarkets and many other outlets.</p>

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. [www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/09/catch-bin-kill.pdf] and then wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick with a flu-like illness
- Keep surfaces in the home and work environment clean

Face coverings

What is the advice?

- The public is being advised to wear face coverings in enclosed public spaces where it is not possible to maintain safe social distancing – for example on public transports or in shops
- This is just one of a number of things the public can do to stay safe outside the home
- The most important measures for preventing the spread of coronavirus outside the home are social distancing, hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes. Wearing a face covering does not replace these measures and is not as effective
- Face coverings should only be used for short periods
- It is not compulsory to wear a face covering in public

Who should not wear face coverings?

- The advice on face coverings does not apply to anyone with symptoms of coronavirus. People with symptoms of coronavirus should isolate at home with their household in accordance with Government advice
- Face coverings should not be worn when undertaking outdoor exercise
- Face coverings should not be used by children under the age of 2 or those who may find it difficult to manage them correctly, for example young children without assistance
- People who may have difficulty breathing whilst wearing a face covering (for example those who suffer from breathing difficulties such as asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD), or those who feel anxious when their mouth or nose is obstructed) should avoid using them

Why is this different now?

- Government has considered the recommendations from SAGE alongside emerging evidence on the benefits of face coverings in public

- Overall, the evidence supporting the use of face coverings is weak. Wearing a face covering offers little extra protection to you but may help you to protect others if you are infected but have not yet developed symptoms of coronavirus. You can spread coronavirus before you have symptoms.
- As lockdown restrictions are eased, more people are likely to come into contact with people they do not usually meet in enclosed public spaces which is why face coverings are being advised.

Where are face coverings recommended? (ie transport/shops)

- The public is being encouraged to wear face coverings for short periods in enclosed public spaces where it is not possible to maintain safe social distancing – for example on public transports or in shops
- Government is not recommending the use of face coverings in the workplace or in schools unless specifically advised

What kind of face covering? (i.e. not PPE)?

- A face covering is not the same as a face mask such as the surgical masks or respirators used as part of personal protective equipment by healthcare and other workers
- A face covering is any cloth that safely covers the mouth and nose, and can be as simple as a scarf or bandana tied behind the head
- It is possible to make your own face covering using an old t-shirt or piece of fabric and government has provided advice on how to do this
- It is possible to make your own face covering without a sewing machine

Infection control/ transmission advice. (still important to wash hands/ wash face coverings)

- It is important to use a face covering properly, including washing your hands before putting it on and taking it off, and avoiding touching your eyes nose or mouth
- Face coverings should be washed regularly using your normal detergent
- Used face coverings should be stored in plastic bags until they can be washed

Why can't we use the same PPE as doctors and nurses?

- The public is being asked not to purchase medical or surgical masks as these must be reserved for health and social care workers and other clinical first responders.

	<p>Do I need to wear gloves for additional protection?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloves are not recommended as it is more effective to wash your hands carefully and to ensure that you do not touch your face. Gloves may provide a false sense of confidence to people wearing them, who then pay less attention to these important actions. <p>If you or a member of your household has symptoms of COVID-19 (cough and/or high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)) you should isolate at home.</p>
06.0	<p>Population groups - employment</p> <p>I need to work, I can't afford to stay at home</p> <p>If you need to stay at home; you will be eligible for statutory sick pay (SSP) from the first day of your absence from work. By law, medical evidence is not required for the first 7 days of sickness. After 7 days, employers may use their discretion around the need for medical evidence if an employee is self-isolating. If you are not eligible to receive sick pay you can apply for Universal Credit and/or apply for New Style Employment and Support Allowance. You can also apply for these if you are prevented from working because of a risk to public health.</p> <p>If you are a gig worker and/or on a zero hours contract, you may be entitled to sick pay. Check your eligibility for Statutory Sick Pay</p> <p>I am self-isolating do I need a doctor's note for my absence from work?</p> <p>If you need to provide evidence to your employer that you have been advised to self-isolate due to coronavirus, either because you have symptoms, or you live with someone who has symptoms and so cannot work, an isolation note is available from NHS 111 online without contacting a doctor.</p> <p>You do not need to get an isolation note for the first 7 days of absence, instead you can self-certify for this period. If your employer asks for evidence to support your absence after this 7-day period; to obtain the isolation note you can visit NHS 111 online if experiencing symptoms. If you are not displaying symptoms visit NHS UK. The isolation note will be emailed to you at an email address of your choice.</p> <p>I am on benefits/need to go to a Job Centre, what do I do?</p>

	<p>You can apply for Universal Credit online. If you need to make an appointment, call the number you are given when you submit your claim, and explain the situation. Jobcentre Plus staff are ready to support you if you are required to stay at home.</p> <p>If you need to claim Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) because of coronavirus, you will not be required to produce a Fit Note.</p> <p>What do I need to tell my employer?</p> <p>Talk to those around you, including your employer, about the importance of staying at home to reduce the risk of spreading infection at work; if you are well, you may be able to work from home.</p>
07.0	<p>Population Groups - Shielded/High Risk groups</p> <p>The government has updated its guidance for people who are shielding taking into account that COVID-19 disease levels have decreased over the last few weeks. People who are shielding remain vulnerable and should continue to take precautions but can now leave their home if they wish, as long as they are able to maintain strict social distancing. If you choose to spend time outdoors, this can be with members of your own household. If you live alone, you can spend time outdoors with one person from another household. Ideally, this should be the same person each time. If you do go out, you should take extra care to minimise contact with others by keeping 2 metres apart. You should not attend any gatherings, including gatherings of friends and families in private spaces, for example, parties, weddings and religious services.</p> <p>Link to further information on schools and the workplace for those living in households where people are shielding.</p> <p>This guidance is still advisory. You will not be fined or sanctioned if you prefer to follow the guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing). You may also choose to remain in your own home at all times if you do not feel comfortable with any form of contact with others. However, careful time outside in the fresh air is likely to make you feel better in yourself.</p> <p>Clinically extremely vulnerable groups</p> <p>Expert doctors in England have identified specific medical conditions that, based on what we know about the virus so far, place some people at greatest risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Disease severity, history or treatment levels will also affect who is in this group.</p> <p>Clinically extremely vulnerable people may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid organ transplant recipients.

- People with specific cancers:
 - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
- Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Other people have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions.

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A copy of the letter that was sent to people falling into this group can be accessed through the NHS England website: www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/at-risk-patient-letter-march-2020.pdf

How do I access support as a clinically extremely vulnerable person?

All people who have received the letter should register for support at www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable. You will need your NHS number to register. This will help you to access support with activities such as obtaining food packages or medications. Even if you do not need any support with daily tasks, please do register with this website to let Government know. Please note that patients are being added to the central data base all the time and there may be a slight delay between you being added to that database and being recognized by the website/ support phone line as someone who is eligible for support.

Visits from people who provide essential support to you such as healthcare, personal support with your daily needs or social care should continue, but carers and care workers must stay away if they have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). All people coming to your home should wash their hands with soap

and water for at least 20 seconds on arrival to your house and often whilst they are there.

If you develop symptoms

If you have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, (a new continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell), you must self-isolate at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to **testing** to arrange or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access

Do this as soon as you get symptoms. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital but if you need treatment, hospitals are still there to support and advise you.

In an emergency, call 999 if you're seriously ill. Explain that you are clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus and are likely to get very unwell.

Prepare a single hospital bag. This will help the NHS provide you with the best care if you need to go to hospital as a result of catching COVID-19. Your bag should include:

- details for getting hold of your emergency contact
- a list of the medications you take (including dose and frequency)
- any information on your planned care appointments
- things you would need for an overnight stay (for example, medication, pyjamas, toothbrush and snacks)
- your advanced care plan (only if you have one)

I think I should be considered as highest clinical risk, but I haven't received a letter. What should I do?

You are not clinically extremely vulnerable if:

- you do not have any of the conditions that make you clinically extremely vulnerable
- you have not been told by your GP or specialist that you are clinically extremely vulnerable or received a letter

If you are not clinically extremely vulnerable you should follow the **guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing)**.

What has changed? - Spending time outdoors

You may now wish to go outside of your property to exercise, walk, or spend some time outdoors. If you do so, the best way to protect yourself is to:

- Strictly avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough and/or a loss of, or change in normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
- keep the number of visits outside to a minimum (for instance once per day)
- go on your own, or with members of your household. If you live alone, you can spend time outdoors with one person from another household (ideally the same person each time)
- go outside when there are fewer people around, such as early in the morning
- ideally spend time in open areas
- always keep a social distance of 2 metres
- take particular care to minimise contact with others
- do not share or exchange personal belongings (such as cups) with others
- avoid going into enclosed spaces and other households, shops and buildings
- spend as long as you feel comfortable outside
- if you would prefer not to spend time outside of your property, try spending time with the windows open to let in fresh air and get some natural sunlight or get out into any private space (such as a garden or balcony), keeping at least 2 metres away from your neighbours and household members at all times.

What should you do if you have someone else living with you?

Whilst the rest of your household are not required to adopt these protective shielding measures for themselves, we would expect them to do what they can to support you in shielding and to stringently follow guidance on social distancing:

- Minimise as much as possible the time other family members spend in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas, and keep shared spaces well ventilated.
- Aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from people you live with and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible. If you can, you should use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. Make sure you use separate towels from the other people in your house, both for drying themselves after bathing or showering and for hand-hygiene purposes.
- If you do share a toilet and bathroom with others, it is important that they are cleaned after use every time (for example, wiping surfaces you have come into contact with). Another tip is to consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with you using the facilities first.
- If you share a kitchen with others, avoid using it while they are present. If you can, you should take your meals back to your room to eat. If you have one, use a dishwasher to clean and dry the family's used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them using your usual washing up liquid and warm

	<p>water and dry them thoroughly. If you are using your own utensils, remember to use a separate tea towel for drying these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We understand that it will be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others at home. You should do your very best to follow this guidance and everyone in your household should regularly wash their hands, avoid touching their face, and clean frequently touched surfaces. <p>Other risk groups</p> <p>Coronavirus (COVID-19) can cause more severe symptoms in the groups below. If you or someone you know falls into these groups you are advised to follow strict social distancing measures instead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions) under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds): chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as severe asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis chronic heart disease, such as heart failure chronic kidney disease chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy diabetes problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above) those who are pregnant
08.0	<p>Complaint about service received from NHS T&T</p> <p>If the caller wishes to make a complaint about the service received from NHS T&T please follow your local organisations complaints process.</p>
09.0	<p>Concerns about safe-guarding</p> <p>All concerns' should be escalated in line with or your organisations escalation policy and referred to the appropriate local safe-guarding team. You should ensure that you collect the address and phone number for the person if you have concerns regarding their safety and provide a short summary of the</p>

	<p>concerns in the comment box. You should then flag/escalate to the call handler team lead if you have any concerns. The call handler with the support of the team leader should make the referral to the local safeguarding team.</p> <p>The safeguarding team in PHE should be made aware of all safeguarding referrals and safeguarding matters. These can be emailed to safeguarding@phe.gov.uk with a quick summary of the concern/referral.</p>
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10.0 Call Management Queries**What should I do if the case or contact requests an email with the advice I have provided today?**

The programme does not send out emails to the cases and contacts with advice. Please advise the case or contact that all the advice provided is available on the **www.gov.uk/coronavirus** webpage.

What do I do if the phone number I was given is wrong?

If the number is not correct, politely apologise and end the call. If you have another phone number for the case or contact, please try this number.

What should I do if I know the person I have been asked to call?

If you are aware in advance then you should not make the call and take steps so that the call is completed by another call handler.

If you become aware that you know the person you are calling at the time of the call then you should seek consent from the person as to whether they are happy to proceed. If the person is not happy to proceed then you should end the call and record in the comments the reason that the call was terminated. then make sure the person's record are available for another call handler to complete.

What should I do if the case I have been asked to call is in hospital

When the you are informed that the case is currently a hospital in-patient, the remainder of the call should follow these steps.

- Check whether the case is available to speak with you.

If yes, then proceed.

If not, then ask if you can speak to a next of kin

It is a routine contact-tracing practice to ask relations or friends if they are aware of any other close recent contacts of someone who is infected but too ill to provide this information themselves.

- Continue the call as far as possible and complete the questionnaire to collect details on their contacts and activity in the 2 days before to the 7 days after onset of symptoms or date of test.
- Cases should be escalated to Tier 1 if they meet any of the criteria in the Tier 2 to Tier 1 escalation SOP/action card. For example – attended hospital for another reason and became unwell while an inpatient.

Cases who were admitted to hospital for COVID-19 related illness in the absence of any other escalation criteria does not require escalation to Level 1.

- Details of Health care worker contacts during their current admission do not need to be collected in NHS T&T/CTAS as they will be followed up by their employer.

If the case or next of kin is unable to proceed

- Please identify an alternative time to complete the questionnaire or check whether there is someone else able to provide the information on their behalf - record the alternative number and details of this contact in the comments section, end the call and unassign the case in NHS T&T/CTAS
- If the case or next of kin is unhappy to complete the call and does not want to be contacted again please refer to the script and change to status of the case to FOLLOW UP FAILED.

What should I do if the person I have been asked to call is too ill and unable to complete the information themselves

If the person who answers is an adult family or household member living with the case, and who reports that the case is not well enough to answer the phone at this time, ask if the family member if they would be willing to provide information about the cases' contacts. Reassure the person that this is standard practice in contact tracing, and that they should do their best to recall the contacts of the case, even if not fully known.

It is a routine contact-tracing practice to ask relations or friends if they are aware of any other close recent contacts of someone who is infected but too ill to provide this information themselves.

What should I do if the person I was asked to call is 16/17 years and their parents/guardian are not available for example they live on their own

Individuals aged 16/17 years old can provide information themselves in the absence of a parent or guardian and you should continue the call and complete the questionnaire.

Please reassure them that it is fine for them to speak to you, but if they would prefer a parent or guardian to be present during the phone call that is fine too.

What should I do if the case I was asked to call say they have had a negative result

Please ask the case to provide details of the date tested and who informed them of their result. Please record this information in the comments box. Please do not collect information on contacts.

Advise the caller that this will be investigated and that the case will be called again to ensure they are given the correct advice. Please select CTAS/NHST&T status FOLLOW UP FAILED.

Please provide the case ID and a summary of the call to your team lead - team leads please escalate to the clinical leads for referral to PHE.

The Clinical lead will alert the PHE SPOC via email and PHE will undertake the investigation of the case and provide the appropriate advice.

Person becomes unwell or collapses during the call

Please take the following action if the case or contact is, or becomes, unwell during their call (e.g. struggling to breathe, complaining of central chest pain or stroke-like symptoms, collapsing etc.)

1. Advise the case/contact that you will call 999, check that you have the current telephone number and address including post code for the current location of the case/contact
2. Advise the case/contact to “stay on the line, I will now transfer you to the 999 service. In the event we get cut off, please hang up and dial 999 yourself immediately.”
3. Place the case/contact on hold and ring 999
4. On answer immediately state: “Please can you disregard the calling number. I need an ambulance for a patient who is calling on the following number (pass the BT operator the patients contact number) and is located in <state town or city>”
5. The BT operator will connect you with the ambulance service based on the telephone number and address provided – you must stay on the line to pass call details
6. 999 service answers call with “Ambulance Emergency, is the patient conscious and breathing?”
- 7a If YES, state “YES, this is the NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme, I have a patient with [state main symptom here, e.g. chest pain, stroke symptoms,]” – you must provide the telephone number and address including post code of the case/contact.

OR

- 7b If NO state “NO this is the NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme, I have a patient that has collapsed while on the line.” – You must provide the telephone number and address including post code of the case/contact to 999 service.
- 9 Answer the questions from the 999 service – they should request the case/contact’s name and telephone number
10. Transfer the caller to 999 and leave the call
11. Record the outcome of the call in NHA T&T.

	the criteria for further clinical assessment pass through to SCAS for clinical assessment but advise the SCAS CH that this caller has already contacted the service and feels they have worsening symptoms
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11.0 Information Governance and Privacy**Who or what is PHE?**

Public Health England (or PHE) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and to reduce health inequalities. It is an executive agency of the Government, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care. You can find out more about PHE and what it does by visiting www.gov.uk/phe.

PHE's responsibilities include the duty to protect the public's health from infectious diseases such as coronavirus (also known as Covid 19).

How do I know you are who you say you are?

Staff should advise that details of the programme can be found at www.gov.uk. Alternatively, the case/contact can hang up and call the number they were called from - 0300 013 5000 where they will hear an automated message regarding the programme. They should be advised that the NHS COVID-19 Test and Trace Programme will attempt to call them again in the future to complete the questionnaire and provide the appropriate advice.

What information will you collect from me and why?

To provide advice to people with coronavirus, including those who are showing symptoms, and identify the people they have been in contact with, the NHS Trace or NHS Test and Trace needs to collect personal identifiable information.

The information collected on people with coronavirus or those with symptoms includes their:

- full name
- date of birth
- home postcode and house number
- telephone number
- email address

It also collects information on the type of symptoms they have and how these are changing over time.

The information collected on the contacts of people with coronavirus includes, where available, their:

full name
home postcode and house number
telephone number

email address

This information is used by PHE to help control the spread of coronavirus by:
 providing advice to people with coronavirus and those who have symptoms
 identifying people who have been in contact with someone with coronavirus symptoms
 and who may be at risk of developing the infection

How will my information be protected?

The personal identifiable information collected by the NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme is protected in several ways.

It is held on PHE's secure cloud environment, which is kept up-to-date to protect it from viruses and hacking.

It can only be seen by those who have a specific and legitimate role in the response and who are working on the NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme. All these staff have been trained to protect people's confidentiality.

The information collected is held in the UK only.

No information that could identify any person with coronavirus, including those who are showing symptoms, or the people they have been in contact with, will be published by PHE.

How long are my records held?

The personal identifiable information collected by the NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme on people with coronavirus or who have symptoms will be kept for 20 years.

The personal identifiable information collected on the contacts of people with coronavirus, including those who are showing symptoms, will be kept for 5 years.

The information needs to be kept for this long as may be needed to help control the spread of coronavirus, both currently and possibly in the future.

Who will you share my information with?

The information collected by the NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme may be shared with NHS doctors and nurses working alongside PHE if required including to trace the contacts of people with coronavirus and those who have symptoms so that they can be offered advice on what to do next.

What are my rights regarding the use of my information?

If your personal identifiable information is used by PHE Coronavirus Contact Tracing and Advisory Service, you have a number of rights.

Your right to get copies of your information

You have the right to ask for a copy of any information about you that is used.

Your right to get your information corrected

You have the right to ask for any information held about you that you think is inaccurate to be changed.

Your right to limit how your information is used

You have the right to ask for the use of any information held about you to be restricted.

For example, you can ask this where you think the information PHE is using is inaccurate.

Your right to object to your information being used

You can ask for any information held about you not to be used. This is not an absolute right and PHE may need to continue to use your information. We will tell you why if this is the case.

Your right to get your information deleted

You can ask for any information held about you to be deleted. This is not an absolute right and PHE may need to continue to use your information. We will tell you why if this is the case.

You can exercise any of these rights by contacting PHE at:

Public Accountability Unit
Public Health England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UG
Email: FOI@phe.gov.uk

You will be asked to provide proof of your identity so that we can be sure we only provide you with your personal information.

How did you get my phone number?

Public Health England and the NHS work closely together and to help reduce the spread of infection we are given appropriate access to patient information. You have been identified as a contact of someone with confirmed COVID-19 and we will have received

your number from the NHS Spine/Patient Demographic Service or the case with COVID-19.

Why do you need my information?

It is important that all cases of COVID-19 and their close contacts are followed up so that we can provide individuals with the correct advice about what actions they need to take. This is to prevent further spread of the infection and to ensure that close contacts take the appropriate actions should they become unwell.

Are you following the GDPR guidance?

The law on protecting personal identifiable information, known as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), allows PHE to use the personal identifiable information collected by the PHE Coronavirus Contact Tracing and Advisory Service.

The section of the GDPR that applies is:

article 6(1)(e) 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller'

As information about health is a special category of information, a further section of the GDPR applies:

article 9(2)(i) 'processing is necessary for reasons of public interest in the area of public health, such as protecting against serious cross-border threats to health or ensuring high standards of quality and safety of healthcare'

PHE also has special permission from the Department for Health and Social Care to use personal identifiable information without people's consent where this is in the public interest. This is known as 'Section 251' approval and includes the use of the information collected by the PHE Coronavirus Contact Tracing and Advisory Service to protect the public from coronavirus.

How do I find out more about how my information will be used or to raise a concern?

If you should like to find out more about NHS COVID-19 Trace Programme, you can contact us at Feedback.ContactTracing@phe.gov.uk.

If you have any concerns about how your personal identifiable information is used and protected by PHE, you can contact our Data Protection Officer at dataprotectionofficer@phe.gov.uk or by writing to:

Data Protection Officer
Public Accountability Unit
Public Health England
4th Floor, Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UG

You also have the right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office if you have any concerns about how PHE uses and protects any personal identifiable information it holds about you.

You can do so by calling the ICO's helpline on 0303 123 1113 or by starting a live internet chat at <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/live-chat/live-chat-individuals/>.

I don't want you to use my data – please can you delete it?

Please write to or email PHE to request that your data is not to be used (or is deleted):
Public Information Access Office , Public Health England, Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG Email: FOI@phe.gov.uk

How do you know who's getting a test?

PHE is working with testing and app colleagues to implement a mechanism to receive notification of people requesting a test.