

# Suspected coronavirus (COVID-19): **Important information to keep you safe while isolating at home**

This leaflet is for patients with suspected coronavirus who have not been admitted to hospital and will be isolating at home.





## Staying at home

- You may have coronavirus. You don't need to be in hospital at this time, but it is important that you self-isolate.
- If your condition worsens please follow the information below and seek medical advice quickly.
- You should assume you have COVID-19 until a test shows you do not.
- Until then, you must self-isolate for at least 10 days along with anyone in your household as they may have coronavirus without showing any symptoms.
- For more information about self-isolation and self-care visit: [nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/gov.uk/coronavirus).
- If you need help from a volunteer to deliver food or medicines visit <https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders>.



## Arranging your COVID-19 test

- Anyone in England with COVID-19 symptoms can have a test.
- You can apply for a test online at [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), or call the Coronavirus Testing Contact Centre free on 119 from 7am to 11pm.
- You may be able to choose between driving to a testing site or getting a home test kit.
- **Do not wait** – wherever possible the test should be done within five days of showing symptoms.



## Get family and friends to check in with you

It is important that someone checks on you regularly. If you are isolating from other people in the same house, talking on your phone or through a doorway could be better than text messages. It will help them hear if you are becoming more breathless or unwell. Even if you live alone, you should arrange to contact someone regularly. Ask them to ring you, if you don't make contact as planned, ask them to seek help. **If you are still unwell after three weeks, please contact your GP.**



## Recovering from COVID-19



### Mild COVID-19 symptoms

**These are common symptoms.** You may not have all of these but still feel unwell.

- High temperature: you feel hot to touch on your chest and back. If you have access to a thermometer, a reading of 38 degrees celsius or higher
- Cough
- Muscle ache or tiredness
- Mild chest pain
- Dizziness or headache
- Loss of taste or sense of smell
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Rashes.



### Supporting your recovery

- Most people recover from coronavirus within three weeks.
- You may have mild symptoms and feel unwell for a short time before slowly starting to feel better.
- To help you recover, you may wish to try:
  - Rest
  - Paracetamol or ibuprofen
  - Regular fluids
- Coronavirus can leave some people feeling unwell for a long time - this is known as long COVID.



For further support on managing your symptoms at home and advice on your recovery visit: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment) and [www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk](https://www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk)



## When and where to seek medical advice

### Contact NHS 111

If you experience any of the following COVID-19 symptoms, you should contact 111 as soon as possible.

- Feeling breathless or difficulty breathing, especially when standing up or moving
- Severe muscle aches or tiredness
- Shakes or shivers
- If you use a pulse oximeter, your blood oxygen level is 94% or 93% or continues to be lower than your usual reading where your normal oxygen saturation is below 95% (re-take a reading within an hour first)
- Sense that something is wrong (general weakness, severe tiredness, loss of appetite, peeing much less than normal, unable to care for yourself – simple tasks like washing and dressing or making food).

#### **You can access 111:**

- Online at [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)
- **By phone 111**
- **Via your GP.**

**You should tell the operator you may have coronavirus.**

### Attend your nearest A&E within an hour or call 999

A minority of people with COVID-19 will suffer more severe symptoms. You should attend A&E as quickly as possible or call 999 immediately if you experience the following:

- Your blood oxygen levels are 92% or less (retake your reading immediately first)
- You are unable to complete short sentences when at rest due to breathlessness
- Your breathing gets worse suddenly.

#### **OR if you develop these more general signs of serious illness:**

- Cough up blood
- Feel cold and sweaty with pale or blotchy skin
- Collapse or faint
- Develop a rash that doesn't fade when you roll a glass over it
- Become agitated, confused or very drowsy
- Stopped passing urine or are passing urine much less than usual.

**You should tell the operator you may have coronavirus and if you have a pulse oximeter give your oxygen saturation reading. These symptoms require urgent medical attention.**



## Blood oxygen and pulse oximeters

Oxygen level in the blood (the oxygen saturation) can be measured by using a pulse oximeter, a small device that you attach to your finger to take a reading. For more information on how to use a pulse oximeter please visit <https://youtu.be/ifnYjD4IKus>. Even if you do not feel breathless, your oxygen levels may be low. If you have a pulse oximeter and your blood oxygen level becomes lower follow the guidance in this leaflet on where to seek advice.



100	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91	90 or less
<b>Normal blood oxygen level for most people – stay at home and continue to check your blood oxygen level regularly.</b>						<b>If you continue to record these blood oxygen levels contact NHS 111 or your GP as soon as possible.</b>		<b>If you continue to record blood oxygen levels of 92% or less attend your nearest A&amp;E immediately or call 999.</b>		

**It is important to seek help if you feel more unwell with any of the above symptoms. If your condition worsens, do not wait but act immediately.**