

COVID 19 FAQ Sheet for employees



If you have any questions, then it is hoped that these FAQ's will answer your questions but if not then we advise that a referral is made to Occupational Health so that a bespoke assessment can be undertaken and a report provided.

1. What if I or my manager needs advice on my fitness for work?

Ask your manager to create a management referral

2. I have symptoms of a cold or respiratory infection – is this Coronavirus?

If you have a fever $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ and / or a persistent cough self-isolate. Some people note a loss of taste and smell.

Contact **NHS 111** online <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> if your symptoms worsen.

3. How do I go about being tested?

Contact your IPC teams if you work in the NHS OR Speak to your HR

4. I have been in contact with a COVID 19 patients in a health care setting

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-healthcare-providers-who-have-diagnosed-a-case-within-their-facility/covid-19-actions-required-when-a-case-was-not-diagnosed-on-admission>

5. I am anxious and worried about the current situation

Does your organisation have an EAP (Employee Assistance program) service? This may be PAM assist and therefore contact; however, it may be another EAP and therefore speak to your organisation/HR. If you do not have an EAP service then you can ask your employer to refer you to PAM for a Well Check which is a discussion with a psychotherapist for support. Or you may wish to contact a charity such as MIND <https://www.mind.org.uk/>; Heads together <https://www.headstogether.org.uk/> Samaritans **116 123** or jo@samaritans.org or online programs like Mood Juice <https://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/>; Headspace <https://www.headspace.com/> which is free during the current crisis. The NHS now have helplines <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

6. I am concerned about finances?

Your EAP if you have one includes financial and debt advice but if you do not have access to an EAP service then look at Martins Money Saving Website <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/> or consider Citizens Advice Bureau

7. I am concerned about attending work and I am not sure I should be in work?

If your answer cannot be found on this page then ask your manager to make a referral to Occupational Health for a COVID 19 risk assessment

8. I am pregnant and I feel I am unable to comply with social distancing at work?

Women who are more than 28 weeks pregnant, or have underlying health conditions, should avoid direct patient contact. Guidance here: - <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/news/updated-advice-for-pregnant-healthcare-workers-and-employers-during-coronavirus-outbreak/>

Ask your manager to make a management referral to OH if you are unsure

9. I have underlying health conditions and I am being told to attend work?

If your health conditions aren't covered here then ask your manager to make a management referral to OH

10. Am I a vulnerable person and I am unsure about being at work?

Are you normally offered a flu vaccine via the NHS?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

11. Am I very high risk and need to self-isolate (shielded person)?

Those in the very high-risk group (Shielded group) are advised to stay at home for 12 weeks.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

The most vulnerable group includes:

- Certain types of cancer patients
- Organ transplant patients
- People with certain genetic diseases
- People with serious respiratory conditions like cystic fibrosis and severe chronic bronchitis
- People receiving certain drug treatments which suppress the immune system
- Pregnant women with heart disease

12. I live with a vulnerable person and I am unsure whether I should be in work?

While the rest of the household are not required to adopt these protective shielding measures they need to do what they can to support the vulnerable person in shielding and to stringently follow guidance on social distancing

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>. Should you not be able to work from home then stringent social distancing needs to take place in the workplace where feasible and if not then the use of PPE is encouraged. Avoiding working with known COVID 19 cases is advised

13. What is social distancing?

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough

Avoid non-essential use of public transport when possible

Work from home, where possible.

Avoid large and small gatherings in public spaces. Avoid gatherings with friends and family.

Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

14. I want to discuss my medical record and my individual plan in relation to risk?

This requires a discussion with your employer and a referral to OH **should they require further information**

15. I/my family have been self-isolating when can I return to work? >>>

Stay at Home guidance for households: current guidelines illustrated

Criteria and guidance applied as of 17/03/2020:

Incubation period = maximum 14 days

Day 1 is the first day of symptoms

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill

If you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus, then you must stay at home for 7 days

If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they stay at home for 7 days from when their symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14-day isolation period.

Household members who remain well stay in self isolation for 14 days due to maximum incubation period, calculated from day 1 of first symptomatic person

Household members do not need to restart the clock if other members become symptomatic during the 14 days self-isolation

DAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Person in household																					
Example household 1																					
A	X																				
B				X																	
C																					
D																					
Example household 2																					
A	X																				
B				X																	
C																					
D																					

Key: X = when illness started - first day of symptoms
✓ = allowed to go out again

16. I am an HCW and have nursed a person who turned into positive case

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-healthcare-providers-who-have-diagnosed-a-case-within-their-facility/covid-19-actions-required-when-a-case-was-not-diagnosed-on-admission>

17. I am diabetic

All diabetics regardless of type 1 or 2 are at higher risk; however if you are unsure what this means for you then ask your manager to make an OH COVID 19 risk assessment referral

https://www.diabetes.org.uk/about_us/news/coronavirus

18. I am obese

Follow social distancing advice <https://www.obesityuk.org.uk/covid19>

19. I have chronic kidney disease (CKD); am on dialysis or have chronic liver disease

Follow the advice of your clinicians who should be contacting you – you are at a higher risk. However if you are unsure ask your manager to refer you to OH

<https://britishlivertrust.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-health-advice-for-people-with-liver-diseaseand-liver-transplant-patients/>

20. I have MS

DMTs affect your immune system, which can make your chances of infection, or complications from infection higher. These risks are different for different DMTs, but generally they are moderate. If you're taking a DMT and think you have coronavirus, you should be able to continue taking it if your symptoms are mild.

<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/about-ms/treatments-and-therapies/disease-modifyingtherapies/covid-19-coronavirus-and-ms>

21. I have HIV

There is currently no evidence that people living with HIV are more likely to catch COVID-19 than anyone else. It's not the case that all people with HIV are considered at increased risk.

Those on HIV treatment with a good CD4 count and an undetectable viral load are not

considered to have weakened immune systems. A 'good' CD4 count means anything over 200. If your CD4 count is less than 200, if you're not on treatment or if you have a detectable viral load, then it's particularly important that you follow the guidance on social distancing.

<https://www.tht.org.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.bhiva.org/coronavirus-and-HIV-responses-to-common-questions-from-BHIVA>

22. I take immunosuppressants

The following immunosuppression therapies are sufficient to significantly increase the risk of infection: Azathioprine; Mycophenolate (both types); Cyclosporin; Sirolimus; Tacrolimus and therefore strict social distancing is required.

23. I have sickle cell trait or problems with my spleen

If you have sickle cell trait please follow the guidance given to the general public (as trait doesn't fall into the at-risk category) but check the full vulnerable groups list in case you fall into another category such as if you have had your spleen removed, you are pregnant or you are over 70). <https://www.sicklecellsociety.org/coronavirus-and-scd/>.

24. I have asthma?

those people with severe asthma will be followed up by the NHS

Guidance can be found here <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/triggers/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

25. I have heart disease?

Anyone with a heart condition is considered high risk of more severe complications of COVID 19 coronavirus. A referral to OH could help with assessing your case in more detail

26. I have a rheumatological condition

Guidance on the management, including risk stratification for rheumatological conditions can be found here: <https://www.rheumatology.org.uk/news-policy/details/Covid19-Coronavirus-update-members>.

27. I am on antihypertensive medication

No higher risk has been found by the [Council on Hypertension of the European Society of Cardiology](#).

28. Can I take Ibuprofen

There is no evidence ibuprofen make COVID worse; however Ibuprofen is not advised for asthmatics and other groups so ensure they read the medication leaflet before taking <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ibuprofen-use-and-covid19coronavirus>

29. how do I get a certificate to provide to my employer? -

if evidence is required by an employer, those with symptoms of coronavirus can get an isolation note from [NHS 111 online](#), and those who live with someone that has symptoms can get a note from the [NHS website](#)