



When someone who has COVID-19 coughs or exhales they release droplets of infected fluid. Most of these droplets fall on nearby surfaces and objects - such as desks, tables or telephones. People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. If they are standing within one meter of a person with COVID-19 they can catch it by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them. Most persons infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care.

As well as those in the older age group; people with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

### **In order to reduce working days lost due to illness and stop or slow the spread of COVID-19; employers are advised to:**

- Promote home working where feasible
- Ensure handwashing facilities are available for all employees and visitors
- Encourage handwashing for 20 seconds upon entering the workplace and regularly during the day. Ensure soap is in plentiful supply. Display posters ([www.WHO.int](http://www.WHO.int)) on how to hand wash effectively
- Encourage use of paper towels to dry hands if driers not available
- Provide easy access to hand sanitising gel (60% alcohol) if available
- Provide tissues and closed bins to put them into
- Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly as surfaces touched by employees and customers is one of the main ways that
- Maintain a 1-meter distance between people where feasible by placing desks apart
- Establish alternating days or extra shifts that reduce the total number of employees in a facility at a given time, allowing them to maintain distance from one another while maintaining a full onsite work week.



### **Consider vulnerable people such as:**

- Those over 70
- Pregnant women
- Those who would normally be advised to have a flu vaccine; examples here:

<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>



- Encourage them to avoid, where feasible, public transport; groups of people and contact with those who have symptoms. Home working would be ideal; however, if this is not feasible such as in the case of some health care and retail workers then proper use of PPE is advised with guidance on donning and doffing (putting on and taking off)

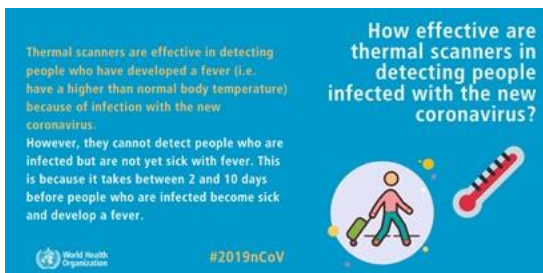
The NHS will be contacting those who are particularly vulnerable and providing them with direct advice. Therefore, consider the advice that these groups (organ transplant; treatment for cancer; diseases of the organs; severe respiratory conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma) will have had in relation to avoiding all possible contact.

- Training workers who need to use protective clothing and equipment on how to put it on, use/wear it, and take it off correctly, including in the context of their current and potential duties. Training material should be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers
- Employees must stay at home for 14 days if unwell with symptoms or they have a household member with symptoms unless they live alone and then the advice is isolation for 7 days (PHE)
- Keep communicating and promoting the message that people need to stay at home even if they have just mild symptoms of COVID-19 and display posters with this message in your workplaces. Combine this with other communication channels commonly used in your organization or business
- If someone in the workplace has suspected COVID-19; close the area they were most in contact with for 72 hours if possible. Thereafter; using gloves and an apron as a minimum, clean all surfaces they may have been in contact with soap and water and then with the usual household anti-bacterial cleaner of 1000 parts per million available chlorine (1000 ppm av.cl); double bag the cleaning materials; store securely for 72 hours and then dispose in the usual rubbish.



Testing for COVID-19 is not advised outside of the NHS/PHE  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-rapid-tests-for-use-in-community-pharmacies-or-at-home>

Testing individual's temperatures at work is not considered reliable



### Symptoms:

- Fever above 37.8 degrees
- Continuous cough
- Shortness of breath





- Isolate for 14 days - If symptomatic and living with someone who is symptomatic;
- Isolate for 7 days if living alone

**PRISONS:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-prisons-and-other-prescribed-places-of-detention-guidance>

**PRIMARY CARE:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wn-cov-guidance-for-primary-care/wn-cov-interim-guidance-for-primary-care>

### So how do we cope with stress and anxiety during the COVID 19 outbreak?

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, eating well, getting adequate sleep and exercise as this will help produce serotonin which is a feel-good chemical in the brain.
- Stay connected with friends and family and if you have to self-isolate arrange group chats, phone calls and emails.
- Recognise your anxiety and stress triggers and try to avoid them. This may be what you read on social media, so try to limit your time on there and find a trusted source to get your information from. Your local authorities and the World Health Organisation will offer sound advice and guidance.
- Avoid stimulants like alcohol, drugs and smoking. They may offer a quick fix to deal with your emotions but in the long run they can make things worse.
- Check in with your emotions. Be curious about how you are feeling and sit with it. Name the emotion and tell yourself that it is ok to feel that way. Carry out a breathing exercise which will give your brain something to focus on, and the actual act of deep, focused breathing will help reduce your stress and anxiety levels.
- Try to separate what you can control from what is out of your control. By focusing on things that you can control, it will give your brain something practical to focus on.
- Practice Mindfulness and be in this moment. Most of the population in the UK will not have had to live through anything like this before, so worrying about the future is not going help.

*"Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally." Jon Kabat-Zinn*

### What should you do if you are sent home to work?

- Maintain your normal working day so you have a clear structure
- Get dressed and start the day as if you were going to work
- Be boundaried about your work area. If you are using the dining room table to work at clear it away of work things at the end of each day





- Take breaks. Being around colleagues often encourages us to take breaks, so it can be easy to keep working when others are not around to prompt us to take time away from our desks
- Keep in contact with colleagues and use video conferencing or telephone conferencing to check in with your team
- Eat well and ensure you are hydrated at all times

### What should you do if you find that have been sent home but cannot work from home?

- Plan how you will fill your days. It is important to have some form of routine.
- Make sure you get up, get dressed and start the day as if you were going to work.
- Look for things to do around the house. Maybe a job that you may have been putting off as you were too busy
- Getting some fresh air. This could be starting work on the garden or getting some pots to grow your own vegetables. Just because you are at home doesn't mean you have to stay indoors.
- Hobbies. This maybe the perfect opportunity to engage with a hobby that has been untouched in a while or read a book.
- Being at home may mean that you have the time to batch cook. You could make a healthy hearty meal and then freeze some for a quick and easy meal when needed.
- Try to make the most of your time in a positive way.
- What should you do if you suffer from OCD and are finding things challenging?
- For many people suffering from OCD, not washing their hands is part of the treatment, so at times like this, when we are being told to wash our hands more often, it can cause a spike in the OCD behavior and anxiety.
- It is recommended that you should wash your hands for 20 seconds after coming from outside and before eating. You must also wash your hands if you have touched anything in a public place or an item that has been touched by many.
- If you follow these guidelines, then anything more could mean you are doing it as part of a ritual or compulsion. Try to pull on the resources you have previously used and seek professional support if required.

### What should you do if you become worried about your mental health or that of colleagues?

- Seek professional support
- Should Psychological First Aiders be available in the workplace, then consider allowing them time to support other members of staff.
- Signpost to the relevant support in house, such as PAM or direct to GP or other health professional.
- Access PAM life self-help videos or MIND.ORG

