

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

1. I have a safety concern (health care workers)

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us/report-concern/report-concern-if-you-are-member-staff>
- CQC is encouraging staff members to speak up

2. I need educational provision for my children

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>. Evidence may be your ID badge or payslip – you do not have to get a letter from your employer

3. Do I have to go into work?

This guidance advises on going in to work where there is no possibility for home working <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others#going-to-work>

4. I am an HGV driver and my licence is due.

The DVLA states that you can be relicensed, for a year, as long as you are well

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

Ask your manager to create a management referral to OH

6. 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 and/or a loss of taste and smell then self-isolate. Some people symptoms like fatigue; malaise; general body aches etc.
Contact **NHS 111 online** <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> if your symptoms worsen and call 999 if you are in respiratory distress.

7. How do I go about tested?

Everyone with symptoms can be tested if over age 5
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>
Essential worker guidance is here
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#essential-workers>.
We in PAM can help with provision of results and follow up of those tested
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-coronavirus-covid-19-tests-and-testing-kits>

8. If you previously tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and have another episode of symptoms, do you need to self-isolate again?

If your first illness was positive, you will probably have developed immunity to coronavirus (COVID-19). Your new symptoms are very unlikely to be due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and therefore you and your household do not need to isolate.
However, if another person in your household develops symptoms (continuous cough/fever of 37.8 or above or a loss of taste and smell) and they have not previously tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), then they need to isolate along with all other members of the household except for you (as you have already tested positive).

If you are concerned about your new possible coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or anosmia), use the 111-coronavirus service or call NHS 111.

9. What PPE (Personal protective equipment) should I wear

Those most at risk within the UK are professionals working in health and social care sectors. This updated guidance gives an overview of infection prevention and control; PPE to use in aerosol generating procedures and non-aerosol generating procedures plus secondary; social; primary community; ambulance etc. settings as well as in ANY setting

[https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe?](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe) PHE have now provided clear guidance on PPE for home care workers

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/881296/Domiciliary_care_guidance_final.pdf

Masks should be fluid repellent or resistant

10. What if I was exposed at work?

HCWs who come into contact with a COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 patient while not wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) can remain at work. This is because in most instances this will be a short-lived exposure, unlike exposure in a household setting that is ongoing. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings>. HCWs should: not attend work if they develop symptoms while at home (off-duty) – see section 21 for self-isolating periods.

For Non health care workers - If you think you have been in contact with someone who has the virus, you no longer need to take action, unless you start to feel unwell yourself

11. 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/>

12. 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

13. 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 and a discussion with your manager does not result in a resolution, then ask your manager to make a referral to Occupational Health for a COVID 19 risk assessment. View this site for guidance

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/>

You may be able to social distance in the workplace – this site has good advice on social distancing at work <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance>

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

Women who are pregnant should practice stringent social distancing and avoid direct patient contact; however, it is a choice they need to make. Those with cardiac conditions are considered very vulnerable. Guidance here: - <https://www.rcog.org.uk/coronavirus-pregnancy>

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

15. 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. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/> provides guidance for those with health conditions
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

16. Am I a vulnerable/high risk 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>

17. 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 from receipt of letter or at least till the end of June 2020.

<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>

You should receive a standard letter from the NHS and if you have not received this then please contact your GP or NHS consultant to receive this

The most vulnerable group includes:

- 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 (COPD).
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism 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.

18. 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. Your manager may make a referral.

19. I am an unpaid carer for someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable

If you're caring for someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, there are some simple steps that you can take to protect them and to reduce their risk.

Ensure you follow advice on good hygiene; only provide care that is essential; wash your hands when you arrive and often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser; cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze; put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards; do not visit or provide care if you are unwell and make alternative arrangements for their care; provide information on who they should call if they feel unwell, how to use NHS 111 online coronavirus service and leave the number for NHS 111 prominently displayed; find out about different sources of support that could be used and accessing further advice on creating a contingency plan is available from Carers UK; look after your own wellbeing and physical health during this time. See further information from Every Mind Matters

20. What is social distancing?

Self-isolating guidance has changed on the 1st of May – Stay at home where possible; exercise for one hour a day; shopping and obtaining medicines when needed but as little as possible. Guidance found here which includes work

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others#eel-decline>

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

Use PPE if you cannot avoid being less than 2 metres from individuals

Clean surfaces frequently and wash hands frequently

21. I am concerned about Postage and packaging/shopping and food. The recent guidance is that the risk of contamination through food and food packaging as well as postage and parcels is very low but maintaining hand hygiene and social distancing when shopping is imperative. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-consumers-on-coronavirus-covid-19-and-food/guidance-for-consumers-on-coronavirus-covid-19-and-food>

22. 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

23. 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

Return to work is after 7 days if symptomatic unless you continue to have a fever. You need to be fever free for 2 days without medication before returning if you are a health care worker. If not; you can return as soon as your temperature returns to normal. A continuing cough is not a concern.

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

HCWs who come into contact with a COVID-19 patient or a patient suspected of having COVID-19 while not wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) can remain at work. This is because in most instances this will be a short-lived exposure, unlike exposure in a household setting that is ongoing. HCWs should: not attend work if they develop symptoms while at home (off-duty), and notify their line manager immediately

put on a surgical face mask, immediately inform their line manager if symptoms develop while at work and return home. The government has provided guidance here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings>

25. 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

26. I am obese

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

27. 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/>

28. 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>

29. 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>

30. 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.

31. 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/>.

32. 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/>.

33. 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

34. 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>.

35. Joint and muscle conditions, such as arthritis

Support and advice found here

[Versus Arthritis: coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

36. I have had a stroke

Support and advice found here <https://www.stroke.org.uk/finding-support/information-coronavirus-stroke-survivors>

COVID 19 FAQ Sheet for employees



37. I am on antihypertensive medication

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

38. 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>

39. 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](#)