COVID (9) – Patient Advice for Staying at Home

This is advice for patients who have developed symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID 19) or those who have a diagnosis of Coronovirus (COVID 19) infection, who must remain at home until they are well.

1. If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID 19), however mild, do not leave your home for 7days from when your symptoms started (This action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious)
2. Plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure you can successfully stay at home
3. Ask your colleagues, employer, friends and family to help you to get things you need to stay at home
4. Stay at least 2metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible
5. Sleep alone, if possible
6. Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitizer
7. Stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible
8. You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For medical emergency dial 999

Those with mild symptoms who are self-isolating will not be tested for COVID 19.

Other key messages:

1. Whilst at home:

• Plan ahead and think about what you will need to be able to stay at home for the full 7 days
• Talk to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help to access the things you will need
• Think about and plan how you can get access to food and other supplies such as medications that you will need during this period
• Ask friends or family to drop off anything you need or order supplies on line. Make sure any deliveries are left outside your home for you to collect

• Make sure that you keep in touch with family and friends over the phone or through social media
• Think about things you could do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films
• When you are feeling better, remember that physical exercise can be good for your wellbeing. Look for online classes or courses to help you take light exercise in your home

Whilst staying at home:
• Remain at home
• Do not go to work, school or public areas and do not use public transport or taxis. You cannot go for a walk.
• You can order medication by phone or online
• You can order your shopping online, the delivery driver should not come into your home
• Aim to stay in a well-ventilated room with a window that can be opened. Try to keep the window open as much as possible to enable ventilation and airflow as this will help to keep clean air moving through your room
• Try to separate yourself from other people in your home and keep the door closed. If you cannot stay in a separate room aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from the other people in your house. This may be particularly difficult for those with small children, people with other caring responsibilities or those living in studio apartments or flats
• Clean hands regularly and try not to touch your face. Clean touched surfaces regularly
• Use your own toothbrushes, eating and drinking utensils (including cups and glasses in the bathroom and bedroom), dishes, towels, washcloths or bed linen. Do not share food or drink
• If you have a garden, its fine to use it as long as you keep 2 metres away from other members of your household. If possible they should use the outside area separately.
• Minimise the time you spend in shared spaces such as bathrooms, kitchens and sitting room and keep shared spaces well ventilated
• If you do share toilet and bathroom, it is important that you clean them after you have used them every time (for example wiping surfaces you have come into contact with). Consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with you using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bath, sink and toilet yourself
• If you share a kitchen, avoid using whilst others present. Take meals back to your own room to eat. Use a dishwasher if you have one or
PHE guidance 12.3.2020
use your usual washing up liquid and warm water and dry items thoroughly, remembering to use a separate tea towel
• If you live alone with children and they develop symptoms, they will need to stay at home for 7 days from the onset of their symptoms
Breast feeding whilst infected:
• Currently no evidence that virus spread through breast milk
• Infection can be spread to baby in the same way as to other individuals
• Benefit of breast feeding outweighs the potential risk of transmission through breast milk or by close contact but is an individual decision and can be discussed with your health visitor, midwife or GP by telephone

• If you wish to breast feed then wash hands before touching baby, breast pump or bottles. Avoid coughing or sneezing on baby whilst breast feeding. Clean any breast pump as recommended by manufacturer after each use. Consider asking someone who is well to feed your expressed breast milk to baby
• If you are feeding with formula or expressed milk, sterilse the equipment carefully before each use. You should not share bottles or a breast pump with someone else
Cleaning and disposal of waste:
• Use your usual household products such as detergents and bleaches, as these will be very effective in getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Clean frequently touched surfaces
• Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed in a second bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste in the room in which you are self-isolating. Keep aside for at least 72 hours before putting into your usual external household waste bin
• Other household waste can be disposed of as normal
Laundry:
• Do not shake dirty laundry to minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air
• Wash garments in line with manufacturers guidance and an ill persons clothes can be washed with other people's clothes
• If you do not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after your 7-day isolation period has ended before taking your laundry to a launderette
PHE guidance 12.3.2020
What can you do to get better?
• Drink water to keep yourself rehydrated – drink enough to keep your urine a pale yellow colour
• You can use over the counter medication such as paracetamol -use as per guidance and do not go over the recommended dose per day
If you need to seek medical advice:
• Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening. If its not a medical emergency contact NHS 111 online
• If you have no internet then ring 111
• If its an emergency then ring 999 and tell call handler you may have coronavirus (COVID 19)
• All routine medical and dental appointments should be cancelled whilst you are ill and staying at home. If you are concerned or have been asked to attend in person within the period you are isolating, discuss this with your medical contact first (eg your GP, local hospital or outpatient service using the number they have provided). If your concerns are related to COVID 19 contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet then call 111
Cough and sneezing:

• Use tissues to cover mouth and nose
• Clean hands regularly

Facemasks:

• Not recommended as an effective way to prevent the spread of infection. They play an important role in clinical settings eh hospitals but little evidence of using outside these settings. If you receive external care you may be asked to wear a mask to minimize the risk to your carer

Family, friends and pets:

• Avoid inviting family and friends to your home
• No evidence that COVID 19 spreads to animals

Ending isolation:

• Remain at home for 7 days after onset of your symptoms
• If after 7days, if you feel better and no longer have a temperature, you can return to your normal routine
• If you have had no signs of improvement then contact NHS 111 online or if no internet ring 111
• A cough may persist for several weeks after infection has cleared. A persistent cough alone doesn't mean you need to self-isolate for more than the 7 days