

# 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.

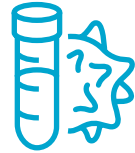
Version 2: July 2021





## 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: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-to-treat-symptoms-at-home](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-to-treat-symptoms-at-home) and [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).
- If you need help from a volunteer to deliver food or medicines visit <https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk>



## 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 going to a testing site or getting a home test kit.
- **Do not wait** – wherever possible the test should be done within eight 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 four weeks, please contact your GP.**

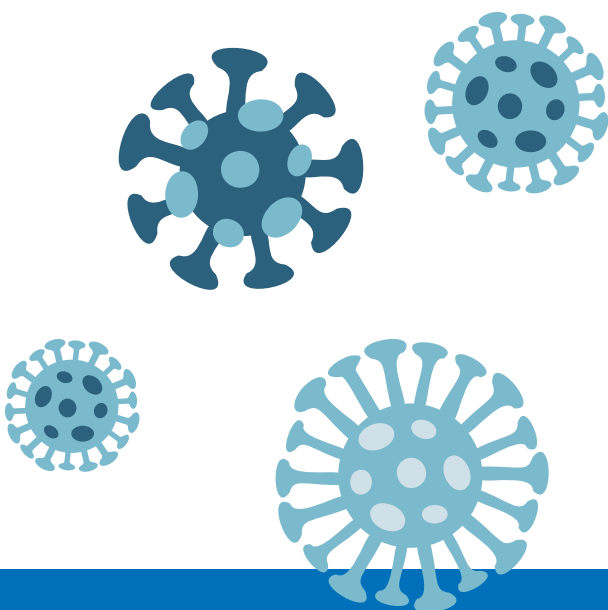
## Recovering from COVID-19



### 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 four 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 (providing there is no medical reason for you not to take it)
  - 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 use a pulse oximeter give your oxygen saturation reading. These symptoms require urgent medical attention.

Remember - if you're pregnant, you should follow the guidance on pages 6 and 7



## 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. If you use a pulse oximeter and your blood oxygen level becomes lower, follow the guidance in this leaflet on where to seek advice. Even if you do not feel breathless, your oxygen levels may be low.

If you are at high risk of becoming seriously unwell, then you may be asked by your GP or health professional to monitor your oxygen levels at home using a pulse oximeter. This could be if you're aged 65 or over, or clinically extremely vulnerable. If you're using a pulse oximeter at home, make sure it has a CE mark, UKCA mark or CE UKNI mark. This means that the device will work properly and is safe if used correctly. If you've been given one to use at home, watch an [NHS YouTube video about how to use a pulse oximeter and when to get help](#).

It might help to write down your oxygen level readings. Keeping a record of regular readings makes it easier to see any changes. It can also help if you need to speak to a healthcare professional.



100	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91	90 or less
<p><b>Normal blood oxygen level for most people – stay at home and continue to check your blood oxygen level regularly.</b></p>						<p><b>If you continue to record these blood oxygen levels contact NHS 111 or your GP as soon as possible.</b></p>		<p><b>If you continue to record blood oxygen levels of 92% or less attend your nearest A&amp;E immediately or call 999.</b></p> <p><b>Remember - if you're pregnant, you should follow the guidance on pages 6 and 7.</b></p>		

**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.**



## If you are pregnant or have recently given birth

If you are pregnant or have recently given birth and have any concerns about your or your baby's health, or if you have any questions about how self-isolation might affect any of your appointments, please do not hesitate to contact your midwife or maternity team. **If you do not have a midwife or maternity team call a GP or call 111 if you cannot get help.**



### Call your midwife or maternity team immediately if:

- your baby is moving less than usual
- you cannot feel your baby moving
- there is a change to your baby's usual pattern of movements
- you have any bleeding from your vagina
- you're feeling very anxious or worried
- you have a headache that does not go away
- you cannot cope with your COVID-19 symptoms at home
- you have a high temperature (37.3°C or above)
- you feel unsafe at any time.

**Do not wait until the next day** – call immediately, even if it's the middle of the night.

### Call 999 if:

- you feel very unwell or think there's something seriously wrong
- you have severe chest pain
- 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 are unable to complete short sentences when at rest due to breathlessness
- your breathing gets worse suddenly.



If you have coronavirus and you are pregnant, you might get sick quicker. This could affect you or your baby.

To ensure you and your baby receive personal and safe care your GP, midwife or maternity team will assess your symptoms. In some cases you may be advised to monitor your oxygen levels at home using a pulse oximeter. They will advise you on what to do next.

**If you record your blood oxygen levels and they are becoming lower you should contact your GP, midwife or maternity team.**

**If your blood oxygen levels are 94% or less, you should contact your hospital immediately or call 999.**

**This requires urgent medical attention.**

### TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!

- if in doubt, get checked out!
- voice your concerns
- ensure your concerns are heard
- do not wait until the next day or your next appointment.



**For more information please visit: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/pregnancy-and-coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/pregnancy-and-coronavirus)**