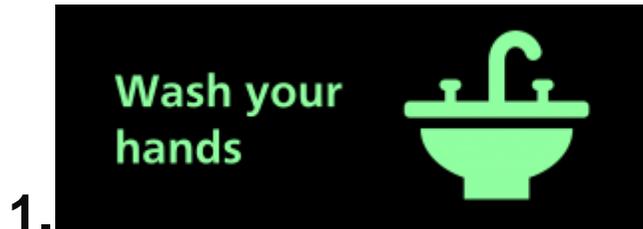


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Coronavirus

5 Things you can do to protect yourself and your community



We can become infected or pass on viruses to others through the droplets in coughs and sneezes.

A simple and effective way to protect yourself is by **washing your hands** frequently with soap and water, or a hand sanitiser if you are out and about. It's particularly important to wash your hands, once you get home or arrive at work, and before you prepare or eat food.

If you are unwell it's vital that you catch your coughs and sneezes in a tissue, or use your arm if needed, throw the tissues away, then wash your hands. Remember **“catch it, bin it, kill it”**



Some people with symptoms of coronavirus such as a cough or fever may be asked to self isolate at home. **This may mean staying indoors and avoiding contact with other people for up to 14 days.**

If the virus is spreading quickly, we may ask whole households to self-isolate, if anyone in the home has symptoms.

It's very important to point out that we expect that the majority of people who catch COVID-19 will not need to see a health professional as their symptoms will be mild, such as those you might expect with a cold or flu and treatable at home.

We understand that being asked to self-isolate could be inconvenient, frustrating or boring, particularly if you have mild symptoms and feel well enough to go out, but we will only ask people to do this if doctors and scientists believe it is necessary in order to slow the spread of coronavirus, protect people who are vulnerable and help the NHS manage capacity. Look out for updates from [Public Health England](#), the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) or the [NHS](#) who will let you know if and when we recommend self-isolation for people with symptoms.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/

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Plan ahead



3.

There are several ways to slow down an infectious disease outbreak. This includes self-isolation as mentioned above, as well as “social distancing.”

One example of social distancing could be encouraging more working from home or another option could involve urging people to continue to go to work or school as usual but reduce social activity or non-essential travel.

Looking ahead, what preparations could you put in place to help you self-isolate if you needed to? Do you have friends or neighbours who could bring food to your house or run errands, or could you do online shopping? Could you talk to your employer about opportunities to work from home if this became necessary?

If you might be more vulnerable to severe symptoms of coronavirus, have you considered the activities you have planned over the coming weeks, listing which are essential and which you could cancel if you needed to? Could you arrange to work from home?

Don't forget to think of others too. Do you have friends, family or neighbours who might need extra help? We understand that people will want to know whether and when any social distancing measures could happen but it is not possible to confirm this now.

These measures would only be implemented if scientists and experts, including the UK's Chief Medical Officers, decide they are necessary.

Any decision will balance both the need to protect people with the importance of maintaining day to day life such as going to work or school.

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If you start to experience symptoms and believe you could have coronavirus, do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital as you could pass the infection to others. Visit [NHS.UK/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or call [NHS 111](https://www.nhs.uk/111) if you need to speak to someone.

Services like [999](https://www.nhs.uk/999) or [Accident and Emergency](https://www.nhs.uk/accident-and-emergency) should only be used for genuine emergencies.

The first cases of COVID-19 in the UK were taken to specialist hospital wards so we could learn more about the virus and prevent it spreading to anyone else, but if we begin to see the virus spreading in the community this approach will no longer be appropriate.

We expect the majority of people who catch COVID-19 will make a full recovery without medical attention, but if you are concerned because you believe you are at greater risk, or feel your symptoms are becoming more severe, call NHS 111 or alternatively 999 in an emergency.



Since COVID-19 began to spread quickly in China, it has been a major global news story and with this level of media and public interest it's inevitable that myths, misinformation and rumours will be shared online.

The UK Government and the NHS will keep people informed of new advice and developments. Please check the following sources of advice frequently:

The [UK coronavirus \(COVID-19\) page](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) will keep you in touch with how the Government is responding.

The [NHS coronavirus \(COVID-19\) page](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) includes a wide range of health-related information.

If you are planning to travel abroad check the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [travel advice page](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

Follow [Public Health England](https://twitter.com/UKHSA) or [The Department of Health and Social Care](https://twitter.com/DepartmentOfHealth) on Twitter for regular updates.

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