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**Keeping Safe in Your Home during Coronavirus**

**How to keep those you live with safe during COVID-19. Guidance for households with grandparents, parents and children living together**

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# **Introduction**

With the arrival of winter and increased number of cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), it is more important than ever that we all take steps to reduce the spread of infection in the community and in our own families and households to keep well; save lives and support the NHS.

This booklet provides you with information and guidance on:

* How you, and those you share a house with, can aim to stay safe at home, including the steps you should take if someone tests positive for coronavirus or displays symptoms.
* Support available if you, or someone you live with, has to isolate
* Details of services that can help during this time

Up-to-date information about restrictions affecting everyone living in Leeds is available at [www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus).

* Anyone with symptoms should book a test via 119 or by visiting [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)
* Seek help if existing symptoms get worse (e.g. difficulty breathing) by calling NHS 111
* In an emergency, call 999 and inform the call handler about any COVID-19 tests or possible exposure
* The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home, reduce our number of physical contacts; to protect the NHS and save lives. When we reduce our day-to-day physical contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. This is especially important if you live with anyone who is older or clinically vulnerable, and clinically extremely vulnerable.

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# **Living with an someone aged over 60 or someone with a serious health condition**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) can make anyone seriously ill. But for some people, the risk is higher. There are 2 levels of higher risk:

**High risk** - these are people with certain illnesses or health conditions that make them “Clinically Extremely Vulnerable” to having serious complications if the contract coronavirus.

**Moderate risk** – this is anyone over the age of 60 or anyone with a long term condition that means they usually get a free flu jab. This group is sometimes referred to as “clinically vulnerable” or “moderately vulnerable”.

People in the High Risk ‘clinically extremely vulnerable’ group have been sent a letter from the NHS or informed by their doctor to follow specific advice. This group of people have been advised to shield at home when rates of coronavirus are particularly high.

**If you live with anyone who is over the age of 60 or considered to be at increased risk from coronavirus, you should closely follow all the government guidelines and advice to minimise your exposure of to the virus. This is particularly important if you are using public transport or coming into contact with a lot of people for work or in public places. This is an important step to reduce the chance of you spreading the infection and helps protect that person when you return home.**

**High Risk - Clinically Extremely Vulnerable**

If you or someone you live with is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, dependent on the rate of infection in the community, they will receive a recommendation to follow some very strict advice. When the rates of the virus are highest – this will include the advice to shield at home and not go to work or to the shops. When rates are not as high, this advice will still be to limit exposure as much as possible and to avoid indoor public places wherever possible.

In general the advice to clinically extremely vulnerable people is to limit their changes of coming into contact with the virus and staying at home as much as possible. This means:

* Working from home or only working in a COVID-safe environment
* Shopping online or only shopping at the least busy times
* Socialising in person only with those they live with or who are in a support bubble with them – but keeping up contact with others through the telephone, the internet, widow visits or outdoors at 2 metres distance when the rules allow it
* Avoiding all non-essential travel – but to keep attending all medical appointments and treatments
* Continuing to receive care and support in their usual way
* Spending time outdoors each day, especially during day light hours

Local support to help clinically extremely vulnerable people stay safe and well, including help to access food and medicines, is available on 0113 376 0330 or visit our dedicated web page at: [www.leeds.gov.uk/shielding](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/shielding).

**Moderate Risk - Clinically Vulnerable**

For people aged over 60 or who have a health condition the main advice is to follow the advice as closely as possible to avoid coming into contact with the virus.

This means:

* Working from home where you can
* Keeping a strict 2m distance from people you don’t live with or who are not in your support bubble
* Continuing to stay healthy and active and attend any medical appointments you have scheduled

Remember:

**Hands** – keep washing them regularly and for 20 seconds

**Face** coverings are now mandatory in indoor spaces other than your home, unless you are medically exempt

**Space** – maintain a 2 metre physical distance from others even in your home where possible.

Top tips for you to support all members of your household who are at a higher risk:

* Try and limit the number of people you come into close contact with outside the home
* Always wear a face covering on public transport or in indoor public spaces
* Wash your hands regularly or use sanitiser when you are out and about and always wash your hands as soon as you return home
* Keep your home well ventilated
* Support them to maintain social connections with family and friends.
* Take part in outdoor exercise or walking with them – this may help them feel more confident and less cautious
* Ask how they are feeling?
* Offer practical help and support like:
  + Picking up shopping – so they can avoid shops and supermarkets
  + Collecting a prescription – so they can avoid going in to a pharmacy
  + Giving a lift to a medical appointment so they can avoid public transport

# **If Anyone in your Home has COVID-19 Symptoms or Tests Positive for COVID-19**

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

* a new continuous cough
* a high temperature
* a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

If you have any of the symptoms above, stay at home and arrange to have a test. Older people may not always exhibit these symptoms. If you are unsure please visit (webpage) or contact 111.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should stay at home for at least **10 days** after their symptoms started, this reduces the risk of infecting other people.

If anyone you live with has symptoms, you should all stay at home and not leave the house for **10 days from the day their symptoms started** even if you have a test and it is negative. This means that no one in the house should go to work, school, public places or use public transport for 10 days.

If your household needs help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medications, you should ask friends or family, or order online or by phone.

If you need to isolate and have no family or friends for support, telephone us on **0113 376 0330**. Our volunteers can help with shopping, collecting medicines or a phone call to check how you are.

If someone in your home has symptoms or has a positive COVID-19 test result consider all opportunities to stay away / keep safe for the whole isolation period. This would need to happen as soon as they experience symptoms and all steps should be taken to reduce the possible spread within the household.

If this isn’t a practical option wherever possible, isolate within the house and stay away from other members of the household. It may be difficult to isolate in your home so some other things you could do include;

* Minimise time spent in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and living rooms.
* Keep any shared spaces as well ventilated as possible by opening windows etc.
* Keep 2 metres apart.
* Use separate towels both for drying after bathing/showering and for hand hygiene purposes.
* Do not invite or allow social visitors to enter your home including friends and family.

Bathrooms

* Use a different bathroom or toilet if possible.
* Clean facilities every time you use them using household products (disinfectant).
* Wipe all surfaces after touching them.
* Use separate towels and keep them in your own room.

Kitchens

* Avoid using kitchens at the same time.
* Use a dishwasher if you have one (if not, use warm water, usual washing up liquid and a clean/separate towel for drying)
* Eat in separate rooms where possible

Bedrooms

* Do not share a bed if possible
* Do not shake dirty washing before using the washing machine

Top Tips

* Letting fresh air into enclosed spaces regularly throughout the day will also reduce the spread of the virus, particularly important in winter when we spend more time indoors. Open windows for visitors such as your support bubble or tradespeople. Make sure you open a window before, during and for a while after their visit and make space.
* It’s easy to let fresh air in without losing too much heat – you can leave a window open a small amount continuously throughout the day, or open it for short sharp bursts of 10 to 15 minutes every couple of hours.
* Using extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens more frequently will remove particles of the virus from the air more quickly.
* When returning home, get washed and changed as soon as possible.
* Items that are impractical to wash every time you return home – such as coats, backpacks and bags – should be cleaned with a suitable fabric anti-bacterial spray or wipes, and then stored safely.
* Try a rota system for shared rooms with the older or clinically vulnerable person using the facilities first.
* If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test result, use a face covering when spending time in shared areas inside your home.
* It is especially important if you have COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result to try and isolate from anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or is over 60 years old.
* Create a calendar for the whole family to countdown the days remaining in isolation and plan something to celebrate safely afterwards
* Try and enjoy group activities together even if you are in separate rooms e.g. eating together on a video call, playing games together online or taking notice of things outside that you can all see through the window.

Remember to clean the things you touch the most and share;

* taps,
* worktops,
* tables,
* backs of hard chairs,
* handles on doors/ cupboards/kitchen appliances,
* light switches,
* handrails,
* TV remotes.
* Phones will need to be wiped and not sprayed.

**Planning Ahead**

There are things that you can do to help make self-isolation easier. These include:

* Planning ahead and thinking about what you will need to stay at home for the full duration of isolation.
* Talking to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help to access the things you will need while staying at home
* Creating a contact list with phone numbers of neighbours, schools, employers, chemists and NHS 111
* Thinking about and planning how you can get access to food and other supplies, such as medications, that you will need during this period. Set up online shopping account if possible or look at options for home delivery from local shops.
* Asking friends or family to drop off anything you need but make sure these are left outside your home for you to collect.
* Ensuring that you keep in touch with friends and family over the phone or through social media.
* Thinking about things you can do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period of staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films.
* Planning out the full 10 days, such as on a make-shift calendar, which many people find helpful. You may also find it helpful to plan in advance what you will do if, for example, someone in your household were to feel much worse, such as having difficulties breathing.
* Remembering that physical activity can be good for your wellbeing when you are feeling better. Look for online classes or courses that can help you take light exercise in your home.
* Protecting mental wellbeing (5 ways to wellbeing)
  + Connect
  + Be active
  + Take notice
  + Learn
  + Give

Support Bubbles

You must not meet socially indoors with family or friends unless they are part of your household - meaning the people you live with - or support bubble.

A support bubble is where a household with one adult joins with another household. Households in that support bubble can still visit each other, stay overnight, and visit outdoor public places together. Once you make a support bubble, you should not change who is in your bubble.

For more information, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>

# **Worried about staying at home and not being able to work?**

If you’re asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace and you’re on a low income, unable to work from home and will lose income as a result, you may be entitled to a payment of £500 from your local authority under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

If you cannot work from home

You should work from home if you can. If you cannot work from home, you might be able to get:

* Test and Trace Support Payment
* Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)
* New Style Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
* Universal Credit
* Pension Credit

Test and Trace Support Payment

Your local council might be able to give you £500 if:

* you’ve been told to self-isolate
* you live in England
* you’re on a low income
* you cannot work from home and will lose income as a result

To apply, visit [www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/self-isolation-support](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/self-isolation-support). For help with this form, you can contact 0113 868 9859.

# **Staying at home and fines**

You could be fined if you do not stay at home and self-isolate following a positive COVID-19 test result, or if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and instructed to self-isolate, because you are a contact of someone who has had a positive test result. If you test positive for COVID-19, it will also be an offence to knowingly provide false information about your close contacts to NHS Test and Trace.

# **Support**

By following these guidelines, you are protecting those you care about and the NHS.

* **Leeds City Council COVID-19 Support - 0113 376 0330**

If you are self-isolating and don't have friends or family locally who can help you, our volunteers can help with shopping, collecting medicines or a phone call to check how you are.

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

If you have difficulty hearing, text: 07480 632 471 (7 days a week, 9am to 6pm)

Website: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus>

* **Leeds Directory – 0113 378 4610**

Supporting you to live well by connecting you to checked and vetted local services and tradespeople as well as local activities and events.

Weekdays: 9am to 5pm

All communities in Leeds have organisations working to support older people including activity groups, lunch clubs, advice and support.

Website: <https://www.leedsdirectory.org/>

* **Mindwell**

This hub has resources, videos and information to help people in Leeds take care of their mental health.

Website: <https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/>

* **Active Leeds – 0113 378 3680**

Leeds City Council’s health and fitness provision for the people of Leeds includes leisure centres offering classes and activities, and community based health programmes such as strength and balance classes.

Website: <https://active.leeds.gov.uk>

* **Home Plus (Leeds) – 0113 240 6009**

Care & Repair Leeds, in partnership with Groundwork NEWY and Age UK Leeds provide support for those who may be struggling to heat the home, fuel advice, need help with hazards in the home or need advice on maintaining independence in the home.

Website: <https://care-repair-leeds.org.uk/>

* **One You Leeds – 0800 169 4219**

Healthy living services in Leeds – including support for stopping smoking, weight management, being more active and eating well.

Website: <https://oneyouleeds.co.uk>

* **Forward Leeds – 0113 887 2477**

If you are worried about your drug and/or alcohol use and would like to seek professional help, contact Forwards Leeds.

Website: [info@forwardleeds.co.uk](mailto:info@forwardleeds.co.uk)

* **Carers Leeds – 0113 380 4300**

Call the advice line if you need information about your caring situation or someone to talk to.

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Website: <https://www.carersleeds.org.uk/>

* **Welfare Advice – 0113 376 0452**

Welfare Rights can offer advice and information to Leeds resident about these and other questions you may have about your income.

Website: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/council-tax-and-benefits/welfare-rights>

* **CAB Leeds – 0113 223 4400**

Citizens Advice Leeds is a local charity providing free, confidential and independent advice to residents of Leeds and the surrounding areas. We provide advice and information on a wide range of subjects, including benefits, tax credits, debt, housing and employment.

Website: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/leeds/>

* **Connect helpline – 0808 800 1212**

This telephone service provides emotional support and information for people in distress.

Open every day: 6pm – 2am

Website: [www.lslcs.org.uk](http://www.lslcs.org.uk)

* **Linking Leeds – 0113 336 7612**

Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds, helping people access services that benefit overall health and wellbeing.

Monday to Thursday: 9am to 5pm

Friday: 9am to 4:30pm

Website: <https://www.commlinks.co.uk/?service=linking-leeds>

* **Grief and Loss Support Service – 0808 1963833 or** [**online chat facility**](https://www.griefandlosswyh.co.uk/)

For anyone suffering any form of grief and loss, or those worried about losing someone, whether this relates to a family member, friend or member of their community. Provided by West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership.

Website: <https://www.griefandlosswyh.co.uk/>

* **Leeds Bereavement Forum – 0113 225 3975**

Signpost people to the most appropriate bereavement service either locally or nationally. Free service open to all.

Website: <http://lbforum.org.uk/>