

## Coronavirus Awareness For Flu Friends

*A guide to help support the vulnerable during a Coronavirus outbreak*



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## What is Coronavirus?

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Information changes on a daily basis please review the updates from either the NHS or Public Health England websites.

### How is it spread?

- Because it's a new illness, we **do not know exactly how Coronavirus spreads** from person to person.
- Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets.
- It's very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Being in close contact with someone who is confirmed to have Coronavirus will increase your risk of catching it (a confirmed case of Coronavirus means someone who has been tested and found to be positive for the virus.)
- Close contact with a confirmed case means:
  - living in the same house
  - contact with their body fluids
  - face-to-face contact, for example talking for more than a few minutes
  - being coughed on
  - being within 2 metres of the person

## What are the Symptoms?

### Stay at home if you have coronavirus symptoms

Stay at home if you have either:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do.

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

- It's very unlikely to be Coronavirus if:
  - you **have not been** in close contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus
  - you **have not been** to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus in the last 14 days – see the coronavirus advice for travellers

If you think you might have coronavirus, **use the NHS 111** online coronavirus service to find out what to do.

## How to avoid catching and spreading coronavirus (social distancing)

Everyone should do what they can to stop coronavirus spreading.

It is particularly important for people who:

- are 70 or over
- have a long-term condition
- are pregnant
- have a weakened immune system

## Who is at high risk?

You may be at high risk from coronavirus if you:

- have had an organ transplant
- are having certain types of cancer treatment
- have blood or bone marrow cancer, such as leukaemia
- have a severe lung condition, such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma
- have a condition that makes you much more likely to get infections
- are taking medicine that weakens your immune system
- are pregnant and have a serious heart condition

## Information:

If you're at high risk, you will be contacted by the NHS by Sunday 29 March 2020. Do not contact your GP or healthcare team at this stage – wait to be contacted.

## What can I do to reduce the risk of catching/spreading the virus?

You can reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of catching or spreading Coronavirus by:

- Maintaining **good basic hygiene**, for example washing hands frequently with soap and warm water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to face, or to other people.
- **Always covering your nose and mouth** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- **Disposing of dirty tissues** promptly and carefully.
- **Cleaning hard surfaces**, such as door handles, frequently using a normal cleaning product.



- Face masks play a very important role in places like hospitals, but there is very **little evidence of widespread benefit for members of the public**.
- There is currently **no vaccine** for Coronavirus (COVID-19). The virus is so new and different that it needs its own vaccine.

## Do

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work

***Simple hygiene measures like washing your hands with soap and water often, and avoiding people who are unwell, can help stop viruses like coronavirus spreading***

- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- 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
- avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of coronavirus

- only travel on public transport if you need to
- work from home, if you can
- avoid social activities, such as going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and cinemas
- avoid events with large groups of people
- use phone, [online services](#), or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NHS services

## Don't

- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- do not have visitors to your home, including friends and family

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

## What are 'Flu Friends'?

Flu Friends are friends, relatives, neighbours and local volunteers who could help in the case of a flu pandemic. These volunteers may be asked to do a variety of roles to help those in self isolation, in particular the elderly. The types of things you could be asked to do includes collecting medicine, dog walking, shopping etc with the aim of keeping the most vulnerable in their homes.

## What are the limits of my responsibility?

### What would I be expected to do?

Flu Friends are volunteers who would do anything you might reasonably expect from a good neighbour. That might include:

- Checking that someone is getting the help and support they need via carers, NHS etc
- Picking up essentials from the shop such as milk, bread etc
- Help with small tasks around the house to enable a person to better manage only if it is safe to do so and you follow all NHS guidance.

### What would I NOT be expected to do?

- You are NOT expected to provide:
  - Any elements of personal care (e.g. helping a person to wash, dress or use the bathroom)
  - Domestic services such as cleaning, laundry etc
  - Any tasks that will cause you to incur expense or take up more time than you are able to give
  - Any tasks that put you or the other person at risk

## Personal Safety

Although incidents when volunteering are extremely rare, your personal safety is paramount to us so follow these simple points when acting as a Flu Friend:

- Observe the good hygiene advice above. Volunteer Cornwall can provide you with hand gels (if available) and rubber gloves if required but good handwashing technique and good personal hygiene are the most effective form of defence
- Let us know when you are making a visit – but also let a friend or relative know, too. Ensure you know where you are going and allow plenty of time to complete your visit within office hours (9am – 4pm)
- If you can't make an arranged visit at the agreed time, let us know.
- Have your phone with you and make sure it is charged. Put the Volunteer Cornwall phone number into your phone so you can get hold of us if you need to – **01872 266988**
- If you see something that worries or concerns you, **report it to us.**
- In the event of an emergency, call 999 and ask for the appropriate emergency service first – then contact us and let us know.

## **If you have symptoms – report them to us and stay at home**

if you have symptoms of coronavirus, you'll need to stay at home for 7 days if you live with someone who has symptoms, you'll need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms. If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.

If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

## **Shopping**

- The first option is that all shopping is paid for online or card direct to the business – click and collect where available. You may need a letter of authorisation to collect and you will need your ID.
- The second option is for a cash payment and we ask that you adopt **strict hygiene guidance** if you handle cash. Consider disposable gloves and /or strict hand washing procedures.
- Client has no money? If you need to consider buying an emergency shop/medicines for someone who has no money (for example because they are unable get out to collect their pension and are unable to pay by card or online) please contact us before you do any shopping. If necessary we will reimburse you on production of receipts but only if we have **approved** this before you go shopping! (We will arrange to invoice them for this outlay)
- We recommend you **do not ask to share or use any PIN numbers**. This will avoid any potential misunderstandings.

## **Data Protection**

- You can share any information you pick up as a volunteer with us but please do not share with anyone else (including your friends and relatives)
- Please pass back to us or destroy any personal details you may record about the people you visit once the volunteering has ended.
- We will not pass on your details to anyone else without your consent.

## **What Can I Expect To Happen Now?**

Once you have registered your details with Volunteer Cornwall, we will pass these onto one of our Community Makers local to you who may be working with local health and care systems to ensure a coordinated response.

## **Finally**

Thank you for your offer of help. Please stay safe and call us on 01872 266988 if you have any questions.

## CORONAVIRUS

Have you been to an affected place  
in the last 14 days

or

had contact with somebody  
with Coronavirus,

and

do you have any of these symptoms?



Cough



Fever



Shortness of  
breath

### Check if you have coronavirus symptoms

To protect others, **do not go** to a GP, pharmacy or hospital.  
**Go to 111 Online first**



111 online <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

Phone 111 if you have no access to 111Online or  
**999** if it is an emergency.