

Coronavirus Patient Information Sheet

Latest news: All our latest news will be put out via our website and Facebook page.

Covid-19 – Do not go to GP, Pharmacy or Hospital if you think you have symptoms:

See link for 111 online or call 111 <https://111.nhs.uk/> We are encouraging people to use in NHS 111 online which can be a quicker and more efficient way of getting through. There is a Coronavirus symptom checker app, this is free to download: <https://covid.joinzoe.com/>

What is meant by ‘shielding’? Shielding is a measure to protect extremely vulnerable people by minimising interaction with others. This means that those who are extremely vulnerable should not leave their homes, and within their homes should minimise all non-essential contact with other members of their household.

Who needs to isolate for 12 weeks? People in this group are being contacted and advised to shield. This does not include all people eligible for the flu jab, but a very specific sub-set of people considered at highest risk of severe illness and hospitalisation from COVID-19.

Every patient is different and if you feel your medical history makes you vulnerable or high risk, the decision to isolate for 12 weeks is one you need to make yourself. Our advice to patients would be to read the online information from reliable websites (111/NHS/GOV UK). Don't rely on receiving a letter to tell you to isolate, as these are only being sent to a specific group of people (detailed below).

I haven't got a letter, will I be receiving one? The letters do not come from general practice, they are sent by NHS England. The groups defined as “extremely vulnerable” who should have received the letter are:

- Solid organ transplant recipients.
- People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy for lung cancer.
- People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment.
- People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer.
- People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or Parp inhibitors.
- People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs.
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe COPD.
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID and homozygous sickle cell).
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of

infection.

- Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Appointments: If you require an appointment please access our website and complete an E-Consult www.beaconmedicalgroup.nhs.uk. A clinician will contact you via the contact number supplied, so please keep your phone available. If after this call you require an appointment this may be done via our video consultation, details of this will be explained to you. If you require a face to face appointment, you will be asked to attend the surgery where you be asked before entering pre-screening questions. If you are high risk or presenting with symptoms of COVID you may be asked to attend a different site to your usual practice.

We are dealing with necessary appointments that cannot be deferred to another time. This means routine recalls such as chronic disease management appointments will be taking place at another time.

As we continue to assess COVID-19 and follow NHS guidelines – some branches may be temporarily closed. Please follow this link for the latest updates: www.beaconmedicalgroup.nhs.uk

Cancelling appointments: If you no longer need your appointment please cancel, you can do this via our 24 hour automated phone service (option 1).

Urgent appointments: All being triaged by a phone call and in a minority of cases you may be asked to attend the surgery.

Am I allowed to contact the surgery about routine problems? Yes! Please still contact the surgery as you would for all routine health problems. It is important for us to be keeping patients well in the community.

NHS App: All patients should download the NHS App if you request medication. If you would like to check the status of your repeat prescription you can do so via the NHS App. When you use the NHS App, you will be able to see your available medications, request a new repeat prescription as well as check if your repeat prescription has been sent to the pharmacy. To check if your prescription has been sent to the pharmacy, simply click 'Prescriptions' on the bottom tab of the NHS App and scroll down to 'Approved'. The NHS App is free to download and also lets you book GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions and access a range of other healthcare services. <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/the-nhs-app/>

Not sure what to do when your child is unwell? HANDi Paediatric app: advice for common childhood conditions. The HANDi Paediatric app gives up-to-date advice about common childhood illnesses and how to treat them. <https://devonccg.nhs.uk/health-services/children-and-young-people/handi-app>

Fit (Sick) Notes: If you are self-isolating and looking for a sick note please do so following the link: <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note>. Please note we do not issue return to work notes. Working people who have been advised to isolate/shield and are unable to work from home can get an 'isolation note' by visiting NHS 111 online, rather than visiting a doctor. Isolation notes

will provide employees with evidence for their employers that they have been advised to self-isolate due to COVID-19. Guidance for employees and employers can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19> . For those who have received the shielding letter, this is evidence for your employer, to show that you cannot work outside the home. You do **not** need to get a fit note from your GP. If you need help from the benefit system visit <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>.

Requesting extra medications: Please do not request extra medications ahead of time or new medications in order to stockpile. Historic medication will not be administered without a clinical review.

Repeat Prescription Ordering: This can be done by our online system, NHS App, using our 24 hour automated phone system (option 1), or if no other alternative on paper to the surgery post box. You **must** nominate a pharmacy to collect from; we are no longer allowing collection from the surgery, this pharmacy can be changed as required. This means you only have to visit pharmacy to collect rather than collect from us, drop off at pharmacy and then collect from pharmacy.

Accessing Your Local Pharmacy: Please do not visit your local pharmacy if you or anyone you live with has coronavirus symptoms. Pharmacies are making changes to allow them to stay open during the pandemic.

More guidance can be found here:

- How to order repeat prescriptions online <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/how-to-order-repeat-prescriptions-online/>
- What to expect from your pharmacy team <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/what-to-expect-from-your-pharmacy-team/>
- How to get medical help from home <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/staying-at-home-to-avoid-getting-coronavirus/how-to-get-medical-help-from-home/>

Midwifery Care: Do you need to contact a Midwife during your pregnancy? Please email the Midwife on: plymouth.midwifebookings@nhs.net and a Midwife will call you.

Please include in the email the following:

- Your name
- Date of birth
- Height
- Weight
- Usual GP
- Address
- The date of your last period
- Your telephone number (and any instructions on the best time to call you)

Caring for Plymouth:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/newsroom/pressreleases/caringplymouthsupporthublaunches>

Overview of the Corona virus from NHS:

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

Overview of the Corona virus from the government:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Stay at home: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19)

infection: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

COVID-19: guidance for employees, employers and businesses:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

Please note this is national advice and we are unable to comment or try to apply to specific cases.