



Prevent—Inform—Assist

Colchester Borough Council's

Community Response Pack

Winter & Spring 2021/22

VERSION 30

January 28

2022

www.colchester.gov.uk/coronavirus



**Vaccination/Fresh Air/Face Covering/Testing/
Stay Home/Handwashing**

INTRODUCTION

This pack has been produced to support you and your community during the ongoing COVID-19 situation and to help you prepare for winter.

Within you'll find a list of key contacts, resources and information in one place, which we hope you can share with your community.

Colchester Borough Council (CBC) continues to work closely with local strategic partners, banded together as One Colchester. The council, voluntary sector, police, health, education and business community along with many others make up the partnership and are committed to close collaboration in support of our communities.

The CBC Community Response team is closely aligned to Community360 (C360) and is dedicated providing support, advice and assistance to those who need it across the borough.

Colchester's amazing communities have responded in force, volunteers, groups and activities springing up with local leaders to help those in need. The Council is supporting this social movement however it can.

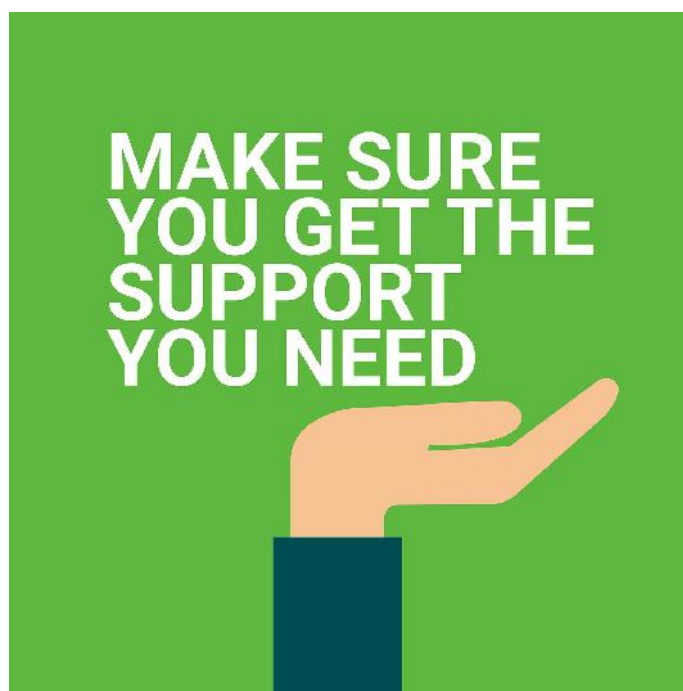
Organisations or groups who need advice or support are encouraged to contact the Communities Response team by emailing communities@colchester.gov.uk

Community360 is co-ordinating an

extensive volunteer response, along with many local communities who are mobilising themselves into action.

Contact them at information@community360.org.uk

We will update the pack on a regular basis as more information becomes available.



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COLCHESTER KEY CONTACTS

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TEAM

Neighbourhood 1: Mersea & Pyefleet, Marks Tey & Layer, Tiptree

Yovone Cook 07976 794786

yovone.cook@colchester.gov.uk

Neighbourhood 2: Castle

Yovone Cook 07976 794786

yovone.cook@colchester.gov.uk

Neighbourhood 3: Highwoods, Mile End, St Anne's & St John's

Keith Parker – Larkin 07817 940632

Keith.parker-larkin@colchester.gov.uk

Neighbourhood 4: Lexden & Braiswick, Rural North, Stanway

Mark Healy 07817 889992

Mark.healy@colchester.gov.uk

Neighbourhood 5: Berechurch, New Town & Christchurch, Prettygate, Shrub End

Chrissy Henegan 07966 235791

Chrissy.henegan@colchester.gov.uk

Neighbourhood 6: Greenstead, Wivenhoe, Old Heath & Hythe

Keith Parker-Larkin 07817 940632

Keith.parker-larkin@colchester.gov.uk

Community Response team

communities@colchester.gov.uk

Colchester Borough Councils Community Safety Team safer.colchester@colchester.gov.uk

Community360 information@community360.org.uk or call 01206 505250.

Colchester Borough Councils Digital Access Team. For support with getting connected email digital.accesssupport@colchester.gov.uk or call 01206 282452.

Parish Councils: a directory of town and parish Councils can be found [here](#).

Ward Councillors: Contact details of all Ward Councillors can be found [here](#).

CBC Neighbourhood Teams: customerservice@colchester.gov.uk

Essex Wellbeing Service. Call 0300 303 9988. Email provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net

Community Agents Call free on 0800 9775858 or email enquiries@caessex.org.uk



COVID-19 RESPONSE—LIVING WITH COVID-19

The government is removing remaining domestic restrictions in England. There are still steps you can take to reduce the risk of catching and spreading COVID-19:

- Get vaccinated
- Let fresh air in if meeting indoors, or meet outside
- Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces
- Get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms, and stay at home if positive

See page 64 onwards for government advice on how to stay safe.



HM Government

HOW YOU CAN CONTINUE TO KEEP YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES SAFE



VACCINES

Get vaccinated to reduce your risk of catching Covid-19 and becoming seriously ill, and to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others.



FRESH AIR

Letting fresh air in if meeting indoors, or meeting outside to disperse Covid-19 particles and reduce the risk of spreading the virus.



FACE COVERING

Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces.



STAY AT HOME IF UNWELL

Try to stay at home if you are unwell.



HAND WASHING

Wash your hands regularly to limit the spread of Covid-19.

USEFUL LINKS

GOVERNMENT ADVICE

- [Coronavirus guidance and support](#)

Staying safe

- [How to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#)
- [How to get and use your NHS COVID Pass](#)
- [COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID](#)

Get help and support with domestic abuse, homelessness or if you're vulnerable

- [Domestic abuse: how to get help](#)
- [Help if you are about to become homeless](#)
- [Get support if you cannot go out to get food or medicine from NHS Volunteer Responders](#)

Get mental health support

- [Get help coping with mental health problems during coronavirus from MIND](#)
- [Getting urgent help for mental health on the NHS website](#)
- [Looking after your mental health: Every Mind Matters on NHS website](#)

Testing and self-isolating

- [Get a COVID-19 test if you have symptoms](#)
- [Order rapid lateral flow tests if you do not have symptoms](#)

COVID Pass

- [Using your NHS COVID Pass for travel abroad and at venues and settings in England](#)

International travel

- [Check what you need to do for your](#)

[journey abroad](#)

- [Check if you qualify as fully vaccinated for travel to England: approved vaccines and proofs of vaccination](#)
- [Travel to England from another country](#)

NHS GUIDANCE

Vaccination

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Book a vaccination](#)
- [Symptoms of coronavirus](#)
- [Testing for coronavirus](#)
- [Vaccination](#)
- [Pregnancy, breastfeeding, fertility and vaccination](#)
- [NHS COVID Pass](#)
- [How to look after yourself if you have coronavirus](#)
- [People at higher risk](#)
- [How to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19](#)
- [Treatments for COVID-19](#)
- [Long-term effects \(Long COVID\)](#)
- [Using the NHS and other health services](#)
- [Vaccination information in other languages, including Punjabi, Arabic and Bengali on NHS England](#)
- [Suffolk and North East Essex COVID-19 Vaccination Service](#)
- [Coronavirus vaccine](#)
- [East Suffolk and North Essex NHS - Coronavirus](#)
- [NHS 111](#)



USEFUL SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS AND WEBSITES

[Colchester Borough council website](#)

Colchester Borough Council [Facebook page](#)

Colchester Borough Council [Twitter](#)

Community360 [Facebook Page](#)

[Age Concern Colchester & North East Essex](#)

[Essex County Council Facebook page](#)

[Essex County Council on Twitter](#)

[Essex Coronavirus Action Facebook Page](#)

[Suffolk and North East Essex COVID-19 Vaccination Service](#)

LOCAL FACEBOOK SUPPORT GROUPS

[Colchester Community Volunteer Group](#)

[Colchester's anti loo roll brigade](#)

[Colchester Community Mask/Face Covering Tree](#)

[Men in Sheds](#)

[The Warm and Toasty Club](#) Weekly online Memory Afternoon every Friday at 1pm.

[FaNs Network](#)

[Monkwick Munch Club](#)

[Essex Carers Network](#)

[Essex Free School Uniform](#)

[United in Kind](#)

[Boaz Project / Outreach](#)

[Colchester Foodbank](#)

- [NHS Every Mind Matters](#)
- [NHS - Need help from a Volunteer Responder?](#)
- [NHS Guidance for those with learning disabilities](#)



FURTHER LOCAL SUPPORT

Essex Wellbeing Service

Linking Essex residents including parents and families with the practical, emotional and social care support they need as they adapt to 'the new normal' of their lives during the pandemic. They have a dedicated group of volunteers to offer help and support.

Call 0300 303 9988. Mon– Fri 8am—7pm.
Sat 10am—2pm. Email
provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net

Register for help here.

Community Agents Essex is a countywide network of agents and volunteers who support older people and informal carers to find and develop independent living solutions from within their local community.

- promoting health and independence
- reducing social isolation
- finding practical solutions to daily living
- providing confidential trusted information
- informing choice and reducing confusion
- increasing individual and community resilience

Colchester's Community Agents are

Morna Clements: Call 07305488233 or email
morna.clements@caessex.org.uk

Clive Wakeford: Call 07540720604 or email
clive.wakeford@caessex.org.uk

Colchester Citizens Advice Citizens Advice offer a telephone and email service. Advice Line 0300 330 2104 (10am - 4pm Monday - Friday). Email advice.colchester@cabnet.org.uk.

Get help claiming Universal Credit by contacting their free national helpline 0800 144 8 444. Advisers are usually available 8am to 6pm

Monday to Friday.

Citizens advice also have an E-voucher system with Colchester Foodbank which enables clients to access a food parcel with in any of the Trussell Trust's food banks.

The Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service.

Tel: 0300 247 0015 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, your free service for children and families. Health Visitors, School Nurses, Healthy Family Support.

St Helena Hospice SinglePoint Members of the public, patients, relatives, carers, GPs and other health and social care professionals can get advice and support over the phone 24/7 with regards anyone who may be in the last year of life or who have specialist palliative care needs. Call SinglePoint on 01206 890360.

Age Concern Colchester. Support includes befriending, the advice service, care in the community, bereavement befriending and dedicated dementia support. For more information, contact them at: 01206 368420 option 3 or
befriending@ageconcerncolchester.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer telephone buddy support service. Macmillan are launching a countrywide telephone befriending service.

Action for hearing loss. Your local Action for Hearing Loss Community Support Officer can help with adjusting hearing aids, batteries and re tubing plus more. Call Angie on 07442 538939 or email
angela.baker@hearingloss.org.uk

Community360. Virtual pub lunches, walk and talk sessions, telephone befriending and for patients leaving Colchester hospital light touch support from volunteer befrienders to help you get back on your feet. Please call 01206 505250 or email
information@community360.org.uk

Reengage. Call companions telephone befriending service. Their call companions love a good chat and they're great listeners too. They'll enjoy getting to know you and telling you a bit about their lives too. Whatever you talk about, the phone calls will give you a real boost. Call companions is a free service. Please do give them a call on 0800 716543 or email at info@reengage.org.uk

Age UK Essex. Their weekly telephone calls are the perfect opportunity to relax in your own home and have a good catch up over a cup of tea with one of their befrienders. This service is free of charge so please call on 01268 525353

Singing online. Golden-Oldies members of the 24 Essex monthly groups can now access free online sing-along sessions every Tuesday and Thursday at 11am on You Tube. Further details from 01761 470006.

Essex Law Clinic. The Essex Law Clinic provides free legal advice to those who live, study or work in Essex, and who cannot obtain legal advice in other ways or afford to pay for a lawyer. Appointments are completely confidential and are currently being conducted online through Zoom, either directly or facilitated by a support organisation. A written letter of advice will be provided following the interview.

The Law Clinic can provide initial advice on the following issues, housing and homelessness issues, employment issues, consumer issues, wills and probate issues, welfare benefits, equality and discrimination, family and child law issues

They are unable to offer appointments for issues that concern immigration, criminal law, tax and debt management. Please email lawclinic@essex.ac.uk for a referral form and more details about the service.

Essex Free School Uniform; The Essex Free School Uniform has been set up to help alleviate the pressure on parents by assisting with the cost of school uniform that can be accessed by a request through FOODBANK (and other partners) or direct through their email address uniform@networks.org.

African Families in the UK The one stop place for families of African origin residing in the UK to seek advice and information on matters relating to parenting, children's education and any family friendly activities that enrich family lives. Contact: Rachel Walton Tel: 07539 455974 afiukrachel@gmail.com

Colchester Chinese Association is run by volunteers, it is set up to serve the local Chinese community and to support its integration into society. This is an all inclusive association.
info@colchesterchineseassociation.co.uk

Refugee Action Colchester. Is a voluntary organisation working with refugees, asylum seekers and people with no recourse to public funds.
enquiries@refugeeactioncolchester.org.uk Tel: 07503 027734

Healthwatch Essex. A free service helping people access, understand, and navigate health, social care and wellbeing services in Essex. We also operate a feedback center for reviews on these services. Dial: 0300 500 1895. Text: 07712 395 398. Email: info@healthwatchessex.org.uk

Website: <https://healthwatchessex.org.uk/> where we can also be contacted via WhatsApp and live chat. Feedback Centre: <https://healthwatchessex.org.uk/services/>

Essex Befriends. Whether you are feeling lonely, isolated, stopped doing things you once loved or generally lack in confidence, Essex Befriends is here to help. It offers befriending

services to people over 18 and who are carers, older people, those experiencing mental ill health or who have a learning disability.

They are currently making most of their contacts by phone, video call, e-mail or texts. Where appropriate and safe, Befrienders can also meet the person they are Befriending in outside spaces.

If volunteering as a Befriender is of interest to you please apply via the Essex Befriends website. Call: 0300 770 1263. Email: essexbefriends@affc.org.uk

Macmillan Information Centre. Providing emotional and practical support to anyone that has been affected by cancer.

Colchester Hospital, CO4 5JL 01206 745347.
Email esneft.cancerwell-beingcentre@nhs.net.
National Macmillan Number 0808 808 00 00

Alzheimer's Society Community Support Service Essex. Providing support via virtual groups, including peer support, quizzes, activity groups, virtual coffee mornings and signing for the brain. Email dementia.connect@alzheimers.org.uk or telephone 0333 150 3456

Colchester Gateway. Is continuing to support individuals and families with learning disabilities, although during lockdown they have extended this to anyone in need who has no support from anyone else. They will issue foodbank vouchers and arrange delivery, can link with other organisations, help with housing and benefit and social care issues, advice on activities and care and support. Assistance with Covid testing and access to health services. Also have a small respite pot and may be able to assist with this. They can provide regular phone and or Zoom/MST support as often as someone may need this. Have a wealth of knowledge and contacts and try and help where they can.

Suffolk Law Centre: Housing legal advice and assistance is now available at Suffolk Law Centre under Legal Aid which can pay some or all of a client's costs.

Legal advice and assistance are provided by a dedicated housing casework team mainly serving clients across Suffolk but with capacity to take clients from North Essex due to lack of legal aid providers in the area.

All advice is by appointment only. You must be eligible for Legal Aid, means and merits tests are applied prior to any work being carried out, to determine eligibility. To make an appointment or for more information please call 01473 408111 or email office@suffolklawcentre.org.uk.

ENFORM: Have set up an eco friendly delivery project called Colchester E-Cargo Bike Delivery Project as a Community Project. It will deliver items throughout central Colchester within a 4.5 mile radius which encompasses Wivenhoe and Rowhedge using a Colchester Borough Council E- Cargo Bike. Charges start at £3. However they have received some funding which allows them to offer a free service to vulnerable residents, particularly in the wards of Greenstead, Berechurch and Mile End. They also offer free deliveries to Community Groups such as the Foodbank and Uniform Exchange and their clients. In addition we offer groups the facility of picking up



donations as well.

For more information or to arrange a pick up or delivery contact Lee Pugh on 07852 958953, e-mail hello@ecargobikecolchester.com or message them on [Facebook](#)

Green Doctor Service. Groundwork East offers the Green Doctor Service throughout the Essex area, focusing on Colchester, Braintree and Harlow. The service works with residents living in fuel poverty that may be struggling to pay their utility bills or to keep their homes warm to better get control of their energy usage, get on top of utility bills including utility debts, in order to live in warmer homes and have a better quality of life.

Services offered:

- Look at funding to improve home energy efficiency i.e. insulation, new boilers.
- Switching energy companies.
- Energy awareness advice for residents themselves.
- Help to pay off debts by applying to grants or setting up payment plans.
- Onward referrals i.e. Anglian Water Priority Services Team.
- Free energy saving measures o LED light bulbs.
- Draught proofing.
- Radiator panels.
- Letter flap and door brushes.
- Hot water bottles.
- Water saving shower heads.

Although the service is free there are

qualifying criteria:

- Anyone aged over 65.
- Anyone living on a low income or with debt.
- Anyone with mental or physical medical conditions, especially ones exacerbated by the cold i.e. arthritis, asthma, cardiovascular conditions.
- Young families who have children under the age of 5.
- Anyone living in emergency housing or poor housing conditions.
- Pregnant women.

Residents can get in touch directly through greendoctoreast@groundwork.org.uk or by calling 077 0294 1440. Referrals can be made through the following webpage <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/cadent-foundation-green-doctor>

N.E.S.T

N.E.S.T. is a small registered charity taking direct action to help struggling families and individuals in our community.

We take donations of furniture, bedding and other household items and pass them on to families and individuals in need, free of charge and with no judgement. **Tel: 07549 647401.** [Facebook page](#)



HOW TO STAY WELL IN WINTER

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you are 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition.

Who's most at risk from cold weather?

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes:

- People aged 65 and older.
- Babies and children under the age of 5.
- People on a low income (so cannot afford heating).
- People who have a long-term health condition.
- People with a disability.
- Pregnant women.
- People who have a mental health condition.

Get advice if you feel unwell

If you are 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, it's important to get medical help

as soon as you feel unwell.

You can get help and advice from:

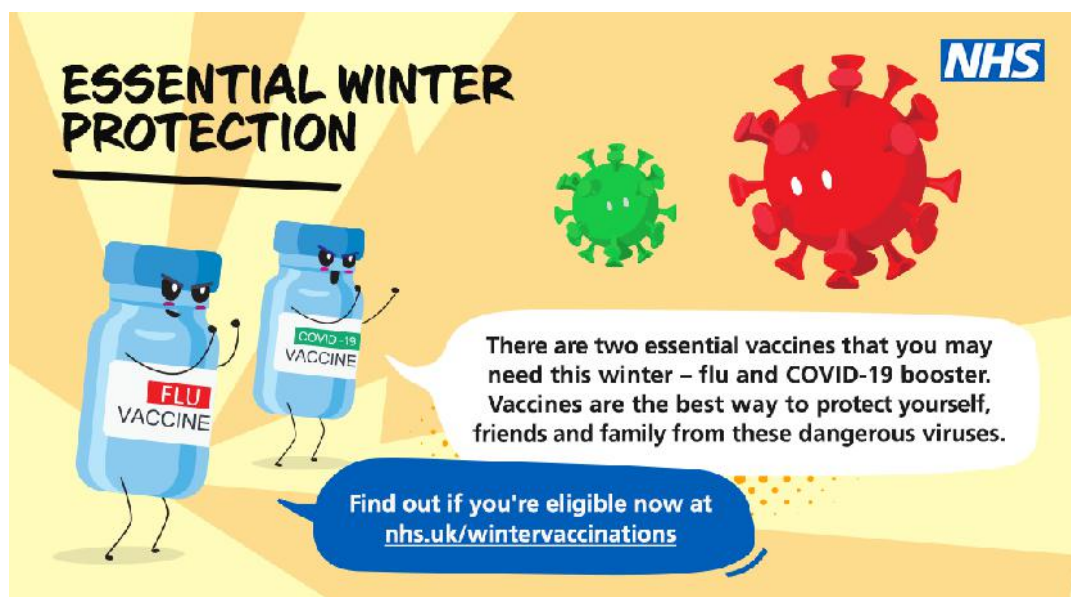
- A pharmacy – pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor.
- Your GP – you may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to.
- NHS 111 – go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do.

The sooner you get advice, the sooner you are likely to get better.

Get a flu vaccine

Flu will often get better on its own, but it can make some people seriously ill. It's important to get the flu vaccine if you're advised to.

The flu vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine. It's offered every year on the NHS to help protect people at risk of flu and its complications.



COULD IT BE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

If you have a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, it could be COVID-19.

[Get advice about symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do](#)

The best time to have the flu vaccine is in the autumn before flu starts spreading. But you can get the vaccine later.

Keep your home warm

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

- If you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18C.
- Keep your bedroom at 18C all night if you can – and keep bedroom window closed.
- If you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18C, as long as you're comfortable.
- Use a hot water bottle or electric blanket to keep warm in bed – but do not use both at the same time.
- Have at least 1 hot meal a day – eating regularly helps keep you warm.
- Have hot drinks regularly.
- To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), babies should sleep in rooms heated to between 16C and 20C.
- Draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts.
- Get your heating system checked regularly

by a qualified professional.

Help with heating costs

You may be able to claim financial and practical help with heating your home. Grants available include the Winter Fuel Payment and the Cold Weather Payment.

For more information on how to reduce your bills and make your home more energy efficient, go to the government's Simple Energy Advice website, or call the Simple Energy Advice helpline on 0800 444 202.

You can also find out about heating and housing benefits on GOV.UK.

It's worth claiming all the benefits you're entitled to as soon as winter begins.

Look in on vulnerable neighbours and relatives

Check on older neighbours and relatives, and those with heart or breathing (respiratory) problems, to make sure they:

- Are safe and well.
- Are warm enough, especially at night.
- Have stocks of food and medicines so they do not need to go out during very cold weather.

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your local council or call the Age UK helpline on 0800 678 1602 (8am to 7pm every day).

If you're concerned the person may have hypothermia, contact NHS 111.



Eat well

Eating healthily can often be more challenging when spending more time at home. There may be more temptations around, for example. By eating a range of fruits and vegetables you can help boost your immunity.

Try to stock up on healthy snacks like fruits, nuts, olives, dips and veg to dip into them! Planning meals throughout the day can be helpful too.

Vitamin D

The body creates vitamin D from direct sunlight on the skin. However, between October and early March we don't get enough vitamin D and whilst you can get some from certain foods, the NHS recommends that we all consider taking 10 micrograms of vitamin D a day to keep bones and muscles healthy throughout the winter months. You can buy vitamin D supplements from most supermarkets, pharmacies and health food stores.

Exercise

Physical benefits of exercise include:

- **Physical resilience:** Our body fights viruses with our immune system, which is strengthened with exercise. There is the

added benefit of increased oxygen in the lungs.

- **Better blood circulation:** Exercise pumps blood (including those handy white blood cells) around the body to where it's needed for repair.
- **Stronger bones and joints:** While we're sitting down working from home everyday, our bones and joints are suffering. Exercise helps keep them in tip-top condition.
- **Stress reducing:** Exercise helps to regulate the levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, in our bodies.
- **Weight management:** Exercise burns calories, which helps many of us stay at a healthy weight, which in turn keeps our lungs and hearts healthy.
- **Improved quality of sleep:** If you find yourself waking up early in the morning or struggling to get to sleep at night, then exercise could be the answer. In turn, sleep helps our cells repair themselves, along with helping the immune system and our general health.

Mental health benefits of exercise include:

- **Reducing stress:** Many people say that exercise is one of the main ways they reduce stress so with more of us working from home than ever before, we'll need to keep stress levels low.
- **Creating resilience:** Due to the physical challenges of exercise, it helps us create positive coping strategies and helps to develop mental resilience.
- **Releases endorphins:** The famous 'feel-good' hormones make us feel great, a key feature in improving our mental health



Leisure World have launched a Free fitness app so you can enjoy the benefits of regular exercise from home!

It has a range of Train at Home workouts, from easy to hard, so everyone can challenge themselves and have fun, no matter their abilities.

It's our small way to try and help you get through this difficult time.

Create your account today, [here](#)

through lockdown.

- **Reduces mental fatigue:** By changing up our daily routine with exercise, we can avoid the mental fatigue that comes with doing the same thing, in the same place, every day.
- **Improves our sleep quality:** Better sleep has been proven to help those struggling with their mental health during difficult times due to the physical benefits it creates.

Things to do

[Walk Colchester](#) and [Cycle Colchester](#) are local organisations which promote and recommend physical activity and access to the local green environment: [paths, trails, parks, woods and open spaces.](#)

As well as guidance on [Getting active at home](#), Sport England's [Join the Movement](#) campaign provides all the latest advice on getting active, with tools to help you make the most out of the fresh air during your exercise. The [Active 10](#) app from the NHS is a great way to help you monitor and gradually increase your brisk walking levels over time. If you're feeling anxious in these uncertain times you could also consider some of the [Walking Meditations](#) from Headspace.

Alongside walking and running, cycling is one of the simplest ways to get active outside and can be done with the whole family. British Cycling have created [Lets Ride Local](#) to encourage safe and responsible cycling - the website includes tips and advice on riding locally, as well as instructions on teaching children how to ride.

[Daily Mile at Home](#) is an easy and fun way to keep fit and maintain good health and wellbeing for you and your children. The Daily Mile guidance for schools has been adapted for use at home to achieve the same benefits.

This comes from as little as 15 minutes or more of walking, running or jogging in the fresh air – doing it at whatever pace suits you best and wearing what you'll feel most comfortable in. Every week on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays, a new challenge is set.

[Active Essex](#) have launched a livestream YouTube channel which features a full timetable of different activities by Essex deliverers to keep us moving more. The following week's timetable is launched every Sunday.

Physical activity helps our body and mind in many ways, and you can read more about getting the right amount of exercise at [Essex Livewell](#).

The Sport for Confidence team continue to support and deliver meaningful physical activity sessions to anyone that faces barriers to participation in North Essex. Whether you face barriers from a learning disability, the ageing process or mental health, the team will support you from the moment you walk through the door. You have access to a full timetable of activities ranging from Seated Exercise to Inclusive Dance. The team ensure sessions are inclusive by creating adaptive, active and most importantly fun sessions! Sessions are online or at Colchester Leisure World. To find out more please email info@sportforconfidence.com or call Sophie on 07394 564941.

Finding your Feet Walks

Community360 understand and value the importance of walking to support good physical and mental wellbeing. The value of being out in nature, exercising and communicating with others has been proven.

Green Prescribing is considered high profile to them and they are passionate and committed to deliver this within our communities. "Finding Your Feet walks" were developed to do just this and have succeeded, by offering supported walks that aim to meet the needs of those who may have previously felt less motivated or confident to attend. They are facilitating walks in both Colchester and Braintree district so please call 01206 505250 for further information.



TOP TIPS FOR DEALING WITH STRESS



TIP 01

Divide big tasks
into small ones

TIP 02

Create to-do lists

TIP 03

Stay active

WHEN THINGS AREN'T SO GOOD OUT THERE... MAKE INSIDE FEEL BETTER.

Visit **Every Mind Matters** for more tips and advice



ANXIOUS OR WORRIED

Staying at home for a prolonged period can be difficult, frustrating and lonely for some people and that you or other household members may feel low. Also, now lockdown is easing you may feel worried or anxious about going out and/or meeting people. It's important to remember to take care of your mind as well as your body and to get support if you need it.

The **Livewell Campaign** highlights 7 steps we can all take to support our mental health during this time and includes links to the latest government advice on looking after our mental health and that of children and young people.

North Essex Crisis Café

The Crisis Café provides a safe, welcoming space where people experiencing emotional distress or mental health crisis can receive support outside normal working hours and is a community based alternative to crisis mental health services

The Crisis café is open 7 days a week, excluding bank holidays from 5pm to 10pm and you can self refer by contacting 0300 330 9492

You can call NHS 111 if you or someone you know needs urgent care, but it's not life threatening.

- If you have an existing mental health problem and your symptoms get worse.
- If you experience a mental health problem for the first time.
- If someone has self-harmed but it does not appear to be life threatening, or they're talking about wanting to self-harm.
- If a person shows signs of possible dementia.

If a person is experiencing domestic violence or physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Dial 111 and select the option for mental health crisis (option2) for immediate and specialist support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service is for people aged over 18 and over and aims to ensure those in need of support can access it quickly when they need it most.

MIND telephone lines will remain open Monday to Friday 9am–5pm on 01206 764600. Alternatively, you can send them an email enquiries@mnessexmind.org.

NHS

TOP TIPS FOR DEALING WITH ANXIETY

TIP 01
Try a short breathing exercise

TIP 02
Learn how to manage anxious thoughts

TIP 03
Keep a mood diary

WHEN THINGS AREN'T SO GOOD OUT THERE... MAKE INSIDE FEEL BETTER.
Visit **Every Mind Matters** for more tips and advice

Better Health every mind matters

In addition, the following is a list of mental health charities and organisations for both adults and young people that are contactable for support and advice:

ADULTS

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Provides a toolkit that helps everyone to support their mental health while working from home.

Links for Deaf people including British Sign Language videos and access to NHS 111.

Mid and North East Essex MIND In need of counselling? Call Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm 01206 764 600, email at enquiries@mnessexmind.org or visit their website for more information.

Live Well Link Well is a free and confidential social prescribing service that provides practical or emotional support of a non-medical nature. They can help you to access support with a range of areas of health and wellbeing, including maintaining mental wellbeing, supporting independence, looking after someone, getting out and about, and social isolation. If you live in mid Essex and are over 18, you can contact the service without having to go through your GP. Call **03003039988** (Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm) or email livewell.linkwell@nhs.net

Anxiety UK provides support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition. Call 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am– 5.30pm)

Men's Health Forum offers 24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email.

OCD Action provides support for people with OCD. Call them on 0845 390 6232 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am-5pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's access charge.

Samaritans provides confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair. Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline).

Textcare provides comfort and care via text message, sent when the person needs it most.

SHOUT Crisis provides 24/7 anonymous text support for when you feel you can't cope. Text "SHOUT" to 85258 for non-judgemental support.

Zero Suicide Alliance Have a link 20 minute module to support those who are in touch with people who might be really struggling over the next few months. It is also helpful for community members as it has a section about talking with family and friends. It is free to access.

Specialist advice for those living with **Diabetes**. The Diabetes UK helpline is also open Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm, at 0345 123 2399 for anyone living with diabetes, their friends or family and anyone else with concerns.

#quitforCovid It is vitally important to quit as smokers are less protected against infections. For support to quit smoking please contact Essex Lifestyle Service on 0300 303 9988. Or visit [Essex lifestyle service - stop- smoking](#)

Combatting loneliness and isolation

You can also download the Zoom app and scroll down the list of online meetings



Feeling
anxious?
Simple
breathing
exercises
could help.

Search
Every Mind
Matters



Better
Health every mind
matters

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service

'Chat Health' enables all 11-19 year olds to text their school nurse on 07520 615734 to discuss their mental health and receive confidential advice and support.

Inspire Suffolk new free Wellbeing Service to support any young person aged 16-25 years and living in Suffolk and Essex.

KOOTH offers young people free, safe and online support.

PAPYRUS young suicide prevention society. Call **0800 068 4141** (Monday to Friday, 10am to 10pm, 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays).

YoungMinds offers information on child and adolescent mental health, services for parents and professionals. Call **0808 802 5544**, (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm).

Essex Youth Service provides Children and Young People Early Intervention Mental Health Services (CYP MHEIS). If you would like to speak to someone for more information about the services CYP MHEIS offer and to find out about what support might be available for you please call their Single Point of Access team on 0300 300 1600 from 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday. Guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

y.e.s Counselling service offers an empathetic, supportive and confidential listening ear to children, young people and their families across Colchester and Tendring around any issues that they may be struggling with. If YOU are between 11 - 19 years old or are the parent or carer of a child or young person who is struggling, and need to talk to someone please call Maria Hales on 07436 805270

between 11am & 2pm Monday—Thursday. Or family therapist Karen Atwell on 07484 091578 Mondays or Wednesdays between 11am & 2pm. If phone lines are busy please leave a number and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Check the website for information and links to practical and emotional support and also check out our [Facebook page](#)

SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DEMENTIA

If you or someone you care for are worried about coronavirus (COVID-19) and need support and advice, call the Dementia Connect support line on 0333 150 3456.

[Alzheimer's Society Website](#) for the most up to date information and advice.

Join [Alzheimer's Society online Community Talking Point](#) where you can connect with others affected by dementia in a similar situation.

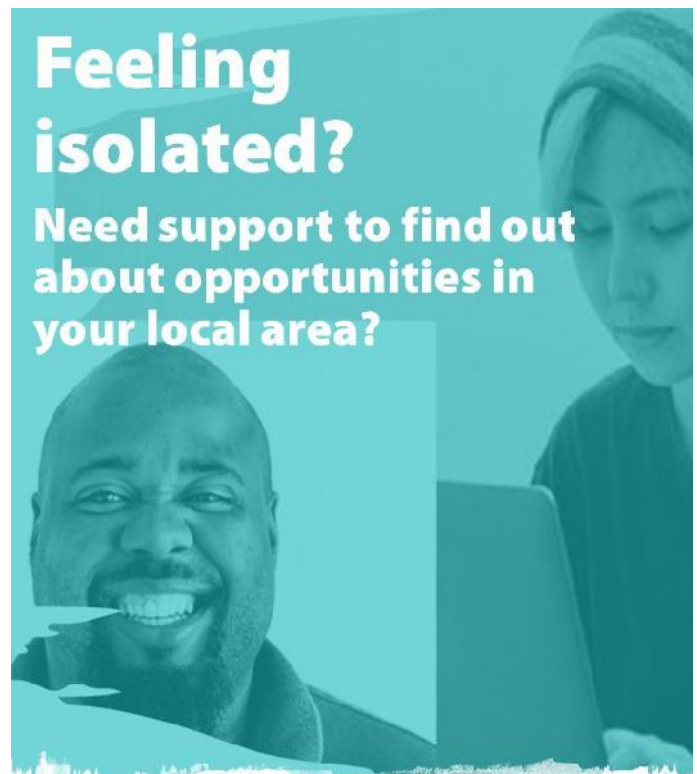
Use this [Dementia Connect online support tool](#) to find dementia information and support that is right for you.

There is information on several websites about looking after your mental health.

[The Livewell campaign](#) provides local and national mental & physical health and wellbeing information including a useful guide on [7 steps to mental wellbeing while at home](#).

Visit the [NHS mental health and wellbeing advice website](#) for self-assessment, audio guides and practical tools, if you are experiencing stress, feelings of anxiety or low mood.

If you already have a mental health problem, you can access [comprehensive guidance provided by Mind](#).



Feeling isolated?
Need support to find out about opportunities in your local area?

Contact the Evolve Project and have a FREE session with an advisor who can link you to local services, employment opportunities and training, social groups, wellbeing and mental health recovery courses and so much more!

Face to face and telephone appointments available

Contact Anna
evolve@enableeast.org.uk
Mobile: 078800706600

EVOLVE



HM Government **NHS**

**EASY TO FEEL
HARD TO TALK ABOUT**

**Search 'NHS Every Mind Matters'
for mental health support**

BOOK YOUR COVID BOOSTER VACCINE

A booster dose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine is available for everyone aged 16 and over, and some children aged 12 to 15, who have had 2 doses of the vaccine at least 3 months ago.

If you have not booked your appointments yet, you're still eligible and can book anytime.

People aged 16 and over

If you're aged 16 or over and had your 2nd dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 3 months ago, you can:

- [book your COVID-19 vaccination appointment online](#) for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy – you can pre-book your booster dose if it's been 2 months (61 days) since you had your 2nd dose
- [find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site](#) to get vaccinated without needing an appointment
- wait to be contacted by a local NHS service such as your GP surgery and book your appointments with them

If you cannot book an appointment online, you can call 119 free of charge. You can speak to a translator if you need to.

If you have difficulties communicating or hearing, or are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can use textphone 18001 119 or the [NHS 119 BSL interpreter service](#).

Some children aged 12 to 15

Some children aged 12 to 15 can get a booster dose if either:

- they have a condition that means they're at high risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19
- they live with someone who has a weakened immune system

Eligible children can go to a [walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site](#) or wait to be contacted by a local NHS service.

If you get vaccinated at a walk-in site, you'll need to bring the letter, text or email inviting you to get a booster dose.

If you do not have an invitation, you can bring a letter from your GP or hospital specialist about your condition, or a letter from the GP or hospital specialist of the person you live with confirming that anyone they live with should get a booster.

People with a severely weakened immune system

If you have or had a severely weakened immune system when you had your first 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, you may have been offered a 3rd dose of the vaccine.

You can get a booster dose (4th dose) from 3 months after you had your 3rd dose.

A GP or your hospital specialist will invite you

If you have recently had a positive COVID-19 test, you need to wait before getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

People aged 18 and over, and eligible children aged 12 to 15, need to wait 4 weeks. Young people aged 16 and 17 need to wait 12 weeks.

for your booster dose when it's due.

You may also be able to book your appointment online or go to a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site.

[Find out more about COVID-19 vaccination for people with a severely weakened immune system](#)

More information

To find out more about the booster dose, including which vaccine you'll get, how well the vaccine works, and vaccine ingredients, see [COVID-19 vaccine](#).

GET HELP WITH TRANSPORT TO YOUR BOOSTER VACCINATION

People living in Essex, who have no means of transport, can now get help to attend pre-booked appointments.

People who are struggling to attend their booster jab appointment because of transport issues can now get help from Essex County Council.

The Essex Wellbeing Service is now able to organise transport for Essex residents who are finding it difficult to organise a way to attend their vaccine appointment. Transport will be provided by taxi service.

This service is free of charge and can also be used if you need transport to get to your first or second dose appointments.

Essex residents who would like help getting to their appointments can email provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net or call 0300 303 9988. The phone line is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm and from 10am to 2pm on Saturdays. Callers' need will be verified, and they will be asked to provide their booking reference or a screenshot of their appointment confirmation.



THE FLU AND THE FLU VACCINE

Flu isn't just a heavy cold

Flu occurs every year, usually in the winter, which is why it's sometimes called seasonal flu. It's a highly infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly.

Colds are much less serious and usually start gradually with a stuffy or runny nose and a sore throat. A bad bout of flu can be much worse than a heavy cold.

The most common symptoms of flu are fever, chills, headache, aches and pains in the joints and muscles, and extreme tiredness. Healthy individuals usually recover within 2 to 7 days but, for some, the disease can lead to hospitalisation, permanent disability or even death.

The harm flu can do

People sometimes think a bad cold is flu, but having flu can often be much worse than a cold and you may need to stay in bed for a few days. Some people are more susceptible to the effects of flu. For them, it can increase the risk of developing more serious illnesses such

as bronchitis and pneumonia, or can make existing conditions worse. In the worst cases, flu can result in a stay in hospital, or even death.

Flu vaccine

The flu vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine. It's offered every year on the NHS to help protect people at risk of getting seriously ill from flu.

The flu vaccine for adults.

The best time to have the flu vaccine is in the autumn or early winter before flu starts spreading. But you can get the vaccine later.

Flu vaccine and coronavirus (COVID-19)

Flu vaccination is important because:

- More people are likely to get flu this winter as fewer people will have built up natural immunity to it during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- If you get flu and COVID-19 at the same time, research shows you're more likely to be seriously ill.
- Getting vaccinated against flu and COVID-19 will provide protection for you and those around you for both these serious illnesses.

If you've had COVID-19, it's safe to have the flu vaccine. It will still be effective at helping to prevent flu.

Who can have the flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine is given free on the NHS to people who:

- Are 50 and over (including those who'll be 50 by 31 March 2022).
- Have certain health conditions.



Covid booster vaccine

Some people may be eligible for both the flu and the COVID-19 booster vaccines.

If you are offered both vaccines, it's safe to have them at the same time.

[Find out more about the COVID-19 booster vaccine and who can get it](#)

- Are pregnant.
- Are in long-stay residential care.
- Receive a carer's allowance, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick.
- Live with someone who is more likely to get infections (such as someone who has HIV, has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis).
- Frontline health or social care workers.

Where to get the flu vaccine

You can have the NHS flu vaccine at:

- Your GP surgery.
- A pharmacy offering the service.
- Your midwifery service if you're pregnant.
- A hospital appointment.

If you do not have your flu vaccine at your GP surgery, you do not have to tell the surgery. This will be done for you.

How to book your appointment

If you're eligible for a free flu vaccine, you can book an appointment at your GP surgery or a pharmacy that offers it on the NHS.

You may also get an invitation to get the vaccine, but you do not have to wait for this before booking an appointment.

Everyone who is eligible for the free flu vaccine will be able to get it.

GP surgeries and pharmacies get the flu vaccine in batches. If you cannot get an appointment straight away, ask if you can book an appointment for when more vaccines are available.

If you have an appointment for a COVID-19 booster vaccine at a GP surgery or pharmacy, you may also be offered a flu vaccine at the same time.

Do not delay booking your flu vaccine appointment so that you can get both vaccines together. Only some people will be offered both vaccines at the same time.

Flu vaccine if you're pregnant

You should have the flu vaccine if you're pregnant to help protect you and your baby.

It's safe to have the flu vaccine at any stage of pregnancy.

[Find out more about the flu vaccine in pregnancy](#)

Who should not have the flu vaccine

Most adults can have the flu vaccine, but you should avoid it if you have had a serious allergic reaction to a flu vaccine in the past.

You may be at risk of an allergic reaction to the flu vaccine injection if you have an egg allergy. This is because some flu vaccines are made using eggs.

Ask a GP or pharmacist for a low-egg or egg-free vaccine.

If you're ill with a high temperature, it's best to wait until you're better before having the flu

How effective is the flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine gives the best protection against flu.

Flu vaccines help protect against the main types of flu viruses, although there's still a chance you might get flu.

If you do get flu after vaccination, it's likely to be milder and not last as long.

Having the flu vaccine will also stop you spreading flu to other people who may be more at risk of serious problems from flu.

It can take 10 to 14 days for the flu vaccine to work.

Flu vaccine side effects

Flu vaccines are very safe. All adult flu vaccines are given by injection into the muscle of the upper arm.

Most side effects are mild and only last for a day or so, such as:

- slightly raised temperature
- muscle aches
- sore arm where the needle went in – this is

more likely to happen with the vaccine for people aged 65 and over

Try these tips to help reduce the discomfort:

- continue to move your arm regularly
- take a painkiller, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen – some people, including those who are pregnant, should not take ibuprofen unless a doctor recommends it

Allergic reactions to the flu vaccine

It's very rare for anyone to have a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to the flu vaccine. If this does happen, it usually happens within minutes.

The person who vaccinates you will be trained to deal with allergic reactions and treat them immediately.

Flu vaccine ingredients

There are several types of injected flu vaccine. None of them contain live viruses so they cannot give you flu.

If you're eligible for the flu vaccine on the NHS, you'll be offered one that's most effective for you, depending on your age:

- adults aged 18 to 64 – there are different types, including low-egg and egg-free ones
- adults aged 65 and over – the most common one contains an extra ingredient to help your immune system make a stronger response to the vaccine

Children aged between 6 months and 2 years who have a long-term health condition are offered an approved injected flu vaccine instead of the nasal spray vaccine.

[Find out about the children's nasal spray flu vaccine](#)

Talk to a GP, practice nurse or pharmacist for more information about these vaccines.



COMMUNITY360 MYSOCIAL PRESCRIPTION™

Do you want to feel healthier, happier and more involved in your community?

What is My Social Prescription™?

Launched in 2013, 'My Social Prescription™' (MSP) is a community based scheme led by Community360 across Colchester. It serves to address the social issues that can affect people's well-being. My Social Prescription™ does this by connecting people to voluntary and community services, volunteering as well as providing support with health conditions and encouraging self-care. My Social Prescription™ is designed to empower individuals.

This is achieved through a personalised service where the MSP team identifies the most appropriate services, club or support to meet the needs of individuals. The result being that people see an improvement in their well-being, feel supported and connected with their community and the demand on public services is reduced.

It has been designed to reduce time spent finding the help people need by informing them of the right service, in the right place, first time.

You can refer yourself, be referred by a professional, a family member, or friend with consent. Many people have been helped

through My Social Prescription™, so give them a call today and chat to see how you might benefit.

Call 01206 505250 or email msp@community360.org.uk

What can we help with?

C360's social prescribes pride themselves on giving you the most up to date information and signpost to relevant services. Some examples of the things they frequently signpost to are :

- Community Transport
- Shop Mobility
- Befriending
- Social Groups and activities
- Benefits advice and guidance
- Cleaning and Gardening

They are working with:

Primary Care Networks (PCN's)

The North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and Community360 are now rolling out My Social Prescription™ across all surgeries in Colchester. They are currently working with the following seven Primary Care Networks and supporting 18 GP surgeries in and round Colchester. Each surgery has a dedicated Social Prescriber Link Worker who visits regularly to support and engage with patients and clinical and non-clinical staff.

Social prescribing is driven by, and tailored to meet the needs of each individual surgery and its patients.

- Essex Family Support Service
- Mental Health assistance and
- Community Transport



are just a few of the ways in which we can provide a bespoke service to individuals to improve their health and wellbeing.

Colchester and Tendring ACE

Community 360 has worked in partnership with ACE since 2017 delivering My Social Prescription™ (MSP). Referrals come to us via the community nurses, physiotherapists and associate practitioners and other clinicians from the organisation. Working alongside medical professionals we provide social support to patients in the community who are in need of this additional support.

Through MSP referrals they provide safe slippers to prevent falls, signpost people to community transport and mobility scooters,

help people attend support groups for medical conditions and connect people to social groups and club/befriending to gain a social life. They have signposted patients to a variety of support services within the communities of both Colchester and Tendring including Befriending services, Citizens Advice, St Helena, Headway, Contact the Elderly, U3A, gardening and cleaning services, the list is endless and we have many success stories from people we have helped across the NE Essex area.

To date they have taken 712 referrals from all services and teams across NE Essex and had many positive outcomes.



FINANCIAL & EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Essex Essential Living Fund

The Essential Living Fund can help to pay for:

- furniture
- clothing
- fuel connection charges
- daily living expenses such as food and toiletries

Adults and families can use it to help pay for bills and essential household items if they are struggling during the coronavirus pandemic. The Essex Essential Living Fund has replaced Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants.

You must live in Essex and apply through [Southend Borough Council](#).

Budgeting Loans

Budgeting Loans can help to pay for:

- furniture
- rent
- home maintenance
- clothing
- travel costs
- other living expenses

They are only available to people who have been on certain benefits for at least 6 months.

Apply for a [Budgeting Loan on GOV.UK](#).

Grants and charitable funds

You might be able to apply for a grant from a charity.

[Search for grants on Turn2Us](#)

Emergency fuel vouchers

Further funding has been secured for the Emergency Fuel Scheme and it is now back in operation with Citizens Advice Essex on behalf of the Citizens Advice service in the county.

The scheme is available for those who are on a low income or facing a financial crisis and have some form of vulnerability such as a health condition, young children, previously homeless etc. It is only available to those with **prepayment** gas and electricity meters. They do not have to be at the point of disconnection to be eligible.

The vouchers amounts are set at £28 for a single person and £49 for a family. The scheme allows for a maximum of 3 vouchers per household and a Citizens Advice adviser will assess if it is appropriate to issue 1,2 or 3 vouchers, given the clients circumstances.

Please email advice@colchestercab.org.uk for an adviser to contact .

[Colchester Citizens Advice](#)

Citizens Advice is now offering a telephone and email service. Telephone 0300 330 2140, Monday - Friday, 10am - 4pm. Email advice.colchester@cabnet.org.uk Get help claiming Universal Credit contact free national helpline on 0800 144 84444

Universal Credit: New claims to Universal credit should be done [online where possible](#). Customers do not need to call DWP to arrange an appointment and they should not attend the Jobcentre. If teams need more information, they will call back claimants.

[SIGNPOST](#)

Based at Greenstead Library - Signpost are no longer able to provide face to face services but continue to provide support for the community.

Their HeadsUp service is for anyone who is unemployed and who has experienced common mental health problems such as anxiety and/or depression. Clare, the Peer Support Worker, is on hand via the phone and email, to provide one to one support and mentoring. You can self-refer by calling the number below, or Clare on 07801 329321. Also offer help with improving digital skills writing CV's. Telephone 01206 890908 or email info@sign-post.inf

[SignPost Facebook page](#)

Colchester CAP

Working in partnership with the national charity Christians Against Poverty, CCDC provides a solution to those with unmanageable debt. They do this by:

- Taking a full picture of a client's finances.
- Providing the client with a budget to stick to and a route out of debt.
- Stepping in between creditors and clients – clients pay into a CAP Plan and CAP negotiate with creditors on their behalf.
- Provide support through this journey from a huge team of befrienders and volunteers.

They believe that the church in Colchester has been given an amazing opportunity to reach into lives of those who are suffering and give them the chance to heal and to be free.

Where Can I Get Help?

If you are struggling with unmanageable debt please call 0800 328 006 or visit capuk.org

Many churches in Colchester offer the CAP Money Course. Click [here](#) to find the latest courses

CAP Life Skills is now running in partnership

with St Leonards. contact siansimpkins@caplifeskills.org for more information

Warm Homes discount

You could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2021 to 2022 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The scheme opens on 18 October 2021.

The money is not paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between October and March.

You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity. Contact your supplier to find out.

The discount will not affect your [Cold Weather Payment](#) or [Winter Fuel Payment](#).

Eligibility

There are 2 ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- You get the [Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit](#) - known as the 'core group'.
- [You're on a low income](#) and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme - known as the 'broader group'.

How you apply for the Warm Home Discount Scheme depends on how you qualify for the discount.

Pre-pay or pay-as-you-go meters

You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter.

Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you're eligible, for example a voucher you can use to top up your meter.

New Style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)

You could get New Style JSA if:

- you usually work less than 16 hours a week
- you're under State Pension age
- you have made enough National Insurance contributions over the last 2 to 3 years

Your savings and partner's income will not affect how much you get. You might be able to get New Style JSA at the same time as Universal Credit.

[Find out more or apply for New Style JSA.](#)

Universal Credit

You could get Universal Credit if:

- you have less than £16,000 in savings
- you or your partner is under State Pension age

If you're already getting tax credits, they will stop when you or your partner applies for Universal Credit.

You might be able to get Universal Credit at the same time as New Style JSA. Depending on your circumstances, Universal Credit can include additional amounts for things like rent or the costs of raising children.

[Find out more or apply for Universal Credit.](#)

Pension Credit

You could get Pension Credit if:

- you and your partner have both reached State Pension age
- your weekly income is below £173.75 (for single people) or £265.20 (for couples)

You might still be able to get it even if you have savings, have a pension or own your

home.

[Find out more or apply for Pension Credit.](#)

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

You may be able to get Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from your employer for every day of work you miss because of coronavirus. If you're off work for 7 or more days, your employer may ask you to provide proof that you are self-isolating because of coronavirus.

You may be able to get Universal Credit or Pension Credit at the same time as SSP. The amount you get may be reduced by the amount of your SSP.

[Check if you're eligible for SSP.](#)

New Style Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

You might be able to get New Style ESA if either:

- you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work
- you or your child has coronavirus, is self-isolating or is shielding

You can apply for it if:

- you cannot get SSP
- you're under State Pension age
- you have made enough National Insurance contributions over the last 2 to 3 years
- you're employed, self-employed or unemployed

Your savings and partner's income will not affect how much you get. You might be able to get Universal Credit at the same time as New Style ESA.

- [Find out more or apply for New Style ESA](#)

The DWP@s Employment and Benefits

Support Website the latest guidance and messages on sick pay, existing benefit claims, new claims to benefit, self-employment, housing and more.

HMRC Help and Support

Employers in particular may wish to register to receive help and support from HMRC.

Individuals and businesses can sign up to receive email alerts about a range of help and support products that are available. These include live and recorded webinars, YouTube videos and online guides

MoneySavingExpert - Coronavirus help and your rights. Financial advice and guidance relating to COVID-19.

Coronavirus advice from Which. Get the latest news and advice on COVID-19, from protecting yourself and your loved ones to the financial support on offer and how to shop safely.

Other financial support you might get

If you receive Universal Credit you may be able to get other payments too.

Help with housing costs and bills

You might be able to get:

- A Cold Weather Payment
- Disabled Facilities Grants
- Discretionary Housing Payments if your Universal Credit payment is not enough to pay your rent
- Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Affordable Warmth
- A reduction in your Council Tax
- WaterSure to cap your bills if you have a water meter

You can get advice on reducing your energy bills from:

Simple Energy Advice - in England and Wales

Help if you're pregnant or have a child

You might be able to get:

- free early education for 2 year olds
- free school meals
- Healthy Start vouchers (in England and Wales) if you're pregnant or have a child under 4 years old
- A Sure Start Maternity Grant in England and Wales

Help with legal costs

You might be able to get:

- help with prison visiting costs
- help with the costs of using courts or tribunals
- legal aid

Help with other costs

You might be able to get:

- help with health costs, including prescriptions and dental treatment
- A Funeral Expenses Payment
- help with building up savings through Help to Save

Advice on money and debt

You can get help and advice from:

- your Jobcentre Plus work coach
- Citizens Advice
- Money Advice Trust
- The Money Manager tool

- [Money Helper](#) for advice about what to do when the coronavirus increase to your [Universal Credit](#) payment ends
- [Money Helper](#) to find a free debt adviser
- [National Debtline](#)
- [Shelter](#) for help with housing and homelessness
- [StepChange](#)
- [Turn2Us](#)
- You can also get help from the [Breathing Space \(Debt Respite Scheme\)](#), but you will need to find a debt advisor first to be able to apply.

Household support fund

Vulnerable households across the country will be able to access a new £500m support fund to help them with essentials over the coming months as the country continues its recovery from the pandemic.

The new Household Support Fund will support millions of households in England and will be distributed by councils in England, who know their local areas best and can directly help those who need it most, including for example, through small grants to meet daily needs such as food, clothing, and utilities. Cash will be made available to Local Authorities in October 2021.

More details will be published at colchester.gov.uk when they are known.

Government Council Tax Rebate

As countries around the world come out of Covid-19 lockdowns, surging demand for energy has meant energy prices have increased. Over the past year, the price of gas alone has quadrupled.



Whilst the problem is global, the effect is being felt by millions of households here in the UK.

The Government has listened to these concerns and it has acted.

Recently, the Government announced that around 20 million households in England in council tax bands A-D will get a £150 rebate from April.

THE REBATE WILL NOT NEED TO BE REPAID.

Who's eligible?

Households in council tax bands A-D will receive the £150 council tax rebate.

This means 4 out of 5 households in England will benefit, including around 95% of rented properties. However, second homes or empty properties will not benefit. If you are unsure of your council tax band, check your council tax band via your printed council tax bill or at: <https://www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands> or contact your local council.

What if my household isn't eligible?

Councils will receive an extra £144 million to provide support to vulnerable households who may not qualify for the £150 council tax rebate.

This includes people on low incomes in council tax bands E-H.

Your council will provide more detail on how this will operate in your area.

How will my household get its £150?

Your council will confirm how the rebate will be paid in your area.

For people who pay council tax by direct debit, in most cases, the rebate will go directly into bank accounts. If you don't already pay by direct debit, you might want to sign up. This will make sure the rebate is paid to you quickly.

For those who do not pay council tax via direct debit, your council will confirm how the rebate will be paid to you. Please make sure that communication is from your local council before providing payment details.

The rebate will not need to be repaid.

What else is on offer to support households with their energy bills?

We are helping to spread the cost of the recent jump in energy prices over several years. £200 of this year's energy bill will be taken off from October and spread equally over the next 5 years instead, easing the burden on family budgets. This is not a debt, no interest is charged and no credit ratings are affected. The Warm Home Discount will be expanded, so nearly 3 million low-income households will benefit from a £150 discount.

USEFUL LINKS

[CBC benefits and support](#)

[What to do if you are self employed and getting less work or no work](#)

[Your rights if you are made redundant](#)

[Work out your redundancy pay](#)

[What to do if you are employed and cannot work](#)

[What to do if you have lost your job](#)

[Find and apply for jobs](#)

[Find online courses to improve your career skills](#)

[Get help moving from benefits to work](#)

[Apply for £500 Test and Trace support payment if you have to self-isolate](#)

[Get financial support whilst you're off work](#)

[What to do if you need to self isolate after travelling abroad](#)

[Claim tax relief for additional household costs if you have to work at home](#)

[Understanding universal credit](#)

[Benefits calculators](#)

[Warm home discount](#)

COLCHESTER FOOD BANK

List of Colchester Foodbank Referral Agents.

Please be aware that this list is changing daily. Please contact the Foodbank Referral Agent from the list and you will be given further information on obtaining a Foodbank Voucher.

Colchester Food Bank @ Stanway Tollgate

Mon—Sat 10am—2pm

3 Tollgate Retail Park, Tollgate W, Colchester
CO3 8RG: info@colchester.foodbank.org.uk
T: 01206 621998

Greenstead Foodbank ' Colchester Credit Union

Open Mon, Tue, Thurs & Fri 10am—12 noon
7 The Centre, Hawthorn Ave, CO4 3PX

Stanway Foodbank @ St Andrews Hall

Corner of Church Lane, London Rd, Stanway,
CO3 8LR.

Tues 11am—1pm

Wivenhoe Foodbank @ Wivenhoe Congregational Church

High Street, Wivenhoe, CO7 9AB

Thurs 10am —12 noon

Colchester Central Foodbank @ Colchester Baptist Church.

Eld Lane, Colchester, CO1 1LS

Wed & Fri 11am—1pm

Tiptree Churches Foodbank @ Tiptree United Reformed Church

80 Chapel Rd, Tiptree, CO5 0HP

Thurs 2pm—4pm

Rowhedge Foodbank @ Mariners Chapel

Chapel St, Rowhedge, CO5 7JS

Mon—4pm—6pm

New Town Foodbank @ St Stephens Church

Canterbury Rd, Colchester, CO2 7RY

Mon 7.30pm—8.30pm, Thurs 11am—1pm

Monkwick Foodbank @ St Margaret's Church

Stansted Rd, Colchester CO2 8RA

Fri 11am—1pm

Myland Foodbank @ Myland Parish Halls

Mile End Road, Colchester

Tues & Fri 10am—12 noon

FOODBANK VOUCHERS

The process for obtaining a food voucher is:

Residents contact a referral agency, who will then take some basic details to complete the voucher application. This will help to identify the cause of the crisis and offer practical guidance. It also means they can prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

Once someone has been issued with a voucher, they can exchange this for three days of emergency food at their nearest foodbank centre.

Find food support and advice

There is a wide range of support in Colchester. Businesses and organisations are offering free meals, as well as activities for children during school holidays. <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/food-support/>

Foodbank Voucher Referral Agent	Voucher Information	Location and Updates	Contact Number
Autism Anglia	Yes - Autism Anglia residents only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 577678
Beacon House	Yes - only to service users already registered with them	Beacon House, Crouch Street, Colchester CO3 3ES	01206 761960
Brightlingsea Food Bank	Yes	Brightlingsea Parish Hall, Brightlingsea	07970 480968
CAP	Yes	Offering phone support and vouchers can be arranged	07971 308388
Hawthorn GP Surgery	Yes	St. Edmunds Centre, Tamarisk Way, Colchester CO4 3GW	01206 517100
CARA	Yes - Existing CARA clients only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 769795
CBH Housing Options and CBH Emergency Tenancy Services	Yes	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	01206 282514
CBC Sheltered Housing (Older Persons Services)	Yes—existing clients only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 282701
Colchester Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	Yes	Phone and email support to anyone that needs advice or Foodbank vouchers	0300 330 2104 or advice.colchester@cabnet.org.uk
Colchester Gateway	Yes existing clients only	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	07710 177050
Eastlights Community Homes	Yes existing clients only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 244700
Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service	Yes supporting families with children	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	0300 247 0015 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday
Essex Integration	Yes	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	01206 861180, Option 2
Essex Outreach Service (Peabody)	Yes		0800 2888883
Estuary Housing	Yes—existing tenants only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	0300 304 500

Foodbank Voucher Referral Agent	Voucher Information	Location and Updates	Contact Number
Family Solutions (Assessment and Intervention Team, Family Support Team and Protection Team)	Yes	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	0345 603 7627
GP Primary Choice Ltd	Yes - To access vouchers patients call their own GP surgery, who then refers to	Yes - To access vouchers patients call their own GP surgery, who then refers to	Own GP Surgery/Care Advisor
Home Start	Yes	The Ark, Jack Andrews Dr, Highwoods, Colchester CO4 9WX	01206 854625
Job Centre Plus	Yes	Colchester Jobcentre Plus, 40 Chapel Street South, Colchester CO2 7AZ	0345 604 3719
MIND	Yes - referral from Mental Health practitioners	The Constantine Centre, 272a Mersea Rd, Colchester CO2 8QZ	01206 764600
Next Chapter	Yes - Next Chapter clients only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 500585
NHS Specialist Mental Health Team	Yes - existing clients only	Foodbank voucher issues to existing clients only	01206 334100
Open Door	Yes - Working in a reduced service, open Mon, Wed, Fri 12- 1pm. Also providing takeaway lunches for those who need them	Open Door at Colchester Baptist Church, Eld Lane, Colchester CO1 1LS	07394 907998
Open Road Colchester	Yes	Pre-arranged appointment only. Open Door, 5a Queen Street, Colchester CO1 2PG (Near Firstsite and the Curzon Cinema) Open Road Colchester	01206 766096
Refugee Action - Colchester	Yes—existing clients only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 638454
Sanctuary Supported Living	Yes	Queen Elizabeth Way, Colchester CO2	01206 762373
St Luke's Church, Highwoods	Yes	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	01206 598234

Foodbank Voucher Referral Agent	Voucher Information	Location and Updates	Contact Number
St Margert's Church, Berechurch	Yes—Fridays 11am—1pm	People will need Foodbank vouchers or be eligible for them to be given out to access either one.	
St Stephen's, Church, New Town is on	Thursdays 11am-1pm	People will need Foodbank vouchers or be eligible for them to be given out to access either one.	
St Peters Church North Hill	Yes - Currently issuing vouchers from the Church, however, should this close, will be from vicarage	St Peter's Church, North Hill, Colchester CO1 1DZ	01206 572529
Victim Support	Yes		www.victimsupport.org.uk
Willow Brook Primary School and Nursery	Yes - Pupils and families of Willow Brook School and Nursery only	Willow Brook Primary School and Nursery, Barnardiston Road, Colchester CO4 0DT	01206 864375
Wivenhoe Congregational Church	Yes	Wivenhoe Congregational Church, 101 High Street, Wivenhoe CO7 9AB	01206 826553
YMCA	Yes - YMCA Tenants only	Foodbank voucher issued to existing clients only	01206 579415
Youth Enquiry Service YES	Yes	Offering phone support and Foodbank vouchers can be arranged	01206 710771

OTHER FOOD PROVISION PROVIDERS – Please contact direct to discuss requirements

Tiptree Churches Food Bank	N/A - Not required	Supporting those in need within Tiptree, Tolleshunt Knights, Messing, Inworth and Great Braxted	Please contact The Revd Annee-Marie Renshaw amlrenshaw@btinternet.com
The Munch Club	N/A for existing clients. New clients will need proof of Universal Credit or low income	Colchester	07974 113341 or maureenpowell1952@yahoo.co.uk
GO4 Social Enterprises	N/A for existing clients. New clients will need proof of Universal Credit or low income	Colchester	07531 207677 or pepidepiter@gmail.com
West Mersea Porch Pantry	N/A not needed	Supporting West Mersea residents	Tel: 07593 429114 or email admin@freshsalt.uk
The Boaz Project	N/A not needed	Colchester	07940441756 or Cdemiltingland@gmail.com FB: @boazproject

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service

Have produced a COVID-19 Pandemic Resource Hub which includes guidance and information on:

- Talking with your children about COVID-19.
- Emotional and physical wellbeing - keeping positive.
- Support for young people.
- Home schooling.
- Relationships at home.
- Safeguarding yourself and others.
- Dealing with a very young baby.
- Home safety tips.
- Families with children with SEND.
- Financial welfare.

Click here to enter **the hub**

The Parenting Together Support Programme

The Parenting Together Support Programme can help you if you feel that stress and conflict is affecting your family. The programme offers parents support to suit their circumstances to address conflict within their relationship, as well as strengthening their parenting skills to bring up their children.

GOV.UK - What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn term.

Colchester Gateway Club Update

People with learning disabilities and their carers/families can join in activities on the **Facebook page**.

Families of children with autism and learning disabilities have forced the UK government into a U-turn over its limit on outdoor exercise.

Digital Safety and Wellbeing Kit

With the help of the leading privacy law firm Schillings, the Children's Commissioner have produced this digital guide for parents and a safety guide for children to help ensure they are safe, and their wellbeing is looked after while at home during the coronavirus outbreak when screen time maybe higher than usual.

StarLine YouTube channel

As well as supporting parents and carers via the telephone helpline, StarLine will also be broadcasting a weekly discussion programme to explore aspects of parenting, education and home learning. Each episode will provide simple and engaging ideas for home learning. StarLive will be broadcast live on YouTube every Wednesday morning at 08.30 and will finish at 9.30am.

Family Innovation Fund-Xtra Services

Provided by the voluntary sector and community partners to provide early support across key areas including understanding coronavirus; managing

and coping with change; separation and loss; managing and coping with anxiety; healthy family relationships and staying active and curious.

The services are available to children and young people aged between 0 and 19-years (up to 25-years for young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) and are aimed at helping young people and families who are not already receiving specialist or statutory support.

They can be accessed directly by families, through referral from a professional such as a teacher, via the **Getting Help in Essex Directory** or by calling one of the organisations themselves.

ECC Every Family Matters

A dedicated campaign aimed at supporting and reassuring parents, carers, children and young people in Essex during the coronavirus outbreak.

They will be signposting relevant guidance and resources on the ECC website across three key areas – children's mental health and wellbeing, young people and social distancing as well as online safety, using their own and shared channels.

To support all parents at this difficult time, the government launched a series of measures for families to assist with remote education, wellbeing and general support. The guidance can be found in the links opposite alongside a whole list

of on- line resources for you to use. If your child/children has SEND need, support can also be found in these resources.

USEFUL LINKS

[Young Minds: Supporting your child through the coronavirus pandemic](#)

[Supporting your children's education during coronavirus](#)

[What parents and carers need to know about schools and education during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Coronavirus-covid-19 online education resources](#)

[GOV.Uk - Online educational resources](#)

[TES - 139 free resources for home learning](#)

[BBC Bitesize](#)

[Explaining coronavirus to children -in a variety of languages](#)

[Coping skills for kids](#)

[Supporting your children's remote education during coronavirus.](#)

NHS Essex Child Health App. NHS Essex Child Health is an extension of the pre-existing Mid Essex Child Health app and has been designed to support parents, grandparents and carers across Essex find NHS advice at their fingertips to help look after their children's health and recognise when they are unwell. [App Store](#). [Android](#)

HOME-START COLCHESTER

Home-Start Colchester is a local charity that has been operating in Colchester since 1993. They are currently still providing a much needed service during Coronavirus for local families and children. Contact Office@homestartcolchester.org.uk

Services include:

- One-to-one support with parenting. This can be in your own home, at a group or at an organised drop-in session.
- Behaviour support advice and strategies for children 0-19 years.
- Information and advice.
- Support with housing concerns.
- Benefit advice.
- Foodbank vouchers including collection and delivery of food where needed.
- Grant applications to help you with items you need but cannot currently afford.
- Group support for parents or children to build skills.
- Healthy eating.
- School readiness and play opportunities, help with education.
- Family events.
- Children workshops for children 5 – 11 years.



- Holiday fund.
- Home-Start have been able to purchase essential family items and delivering free much needed items such as nappies, wipes, food and crafts.



INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

GOV.UK—Supporting disabled people through the Coronavirus outbreak

GOV.UK—Financial help if you are disabled.

Council for disabled children. Have gathered a list of resources and guidance about coronavirus to share with parent carers, children & young people and education, health and social care practitioners.

Disability Rights UK. Coronavirus e-news: practical information for disabled people, information on and links to government and institutional guidance.

Contact. Information and advice for families with disabled children.

Public Health easy to read booklet. Coronavirus advice for people with learning disability.

Scope coronavirus information and links.

Social care and support guide. If you or someone you know needs help with day-to-day living because of illness or disability, this website explains your options and where you can get support.

British Sign Language Versions of Government Advice.

Learning Disability and Autism. NHS easy to read advice for those supporting people with a learning disability or autistic people.

National Autistic Society. Information and Guidance for autistic people and their families.

Royal National Institute for the Blind. Sight advice and frequently asked questions.

Guide Dogs. Coronavirus and guide dogs.

Special Needs Jungle. Latest Coronavirus information relevant for SEND families.

Action on Hearing Loss

Disability Horizons. Coronavirus—a practical guide if you are disabled.

NHS Get active with a disability.

Disability Grants

Access to Work: Get support in work if you have a disability or health condition

Mencap, a charity for people with a learning disability and their families and carers, have created some guides about coronavirus in Easy Read format for people with a learning disability, their families, support workers and healthcare professionals. Resources include information on what coronavirus is and government guidance.

Information in British Sign Language

Essential coronavirus information

Face touching

Home isolation

How to use the NHS

Spot the signs of coronavirus

How virus spreads: Cash machine

How virus spreads: Door handle

How the virus spreads: pedestrian crossing

SignHealth and **BTM Projects** have also produced coronavirus information videos in British Sign Language

COVID-19 vaccination: British sign language resources.

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

If you are caring for someone who is extremely vulnerable, it is useful to understand what extra care and precautionary measures you can take.

- In the first place, you can follow the [NHS hygiene advice](#) for people at higher risk.
- As long as you have no COVID-19 symptoms and take every precaution, **you are allowed to continue visiting someone who relies on you for care** – find out [what protective measures you should take](#).
- If you do start having symptoms, it is imperative that you self isolate and take the right steps – see below.
- Need to consider a contingency plan? For suggestions on arranging alternative care, see our guidance on [making a plan](#).

If you care for someone with a disability, you may also be able to benefit from a 'support bubble'/'extended household'. This also continues to apply to those who live alone or in a single adult household. You can find out more information [here](#).

Getting vaccinated

Carers are now included on the vaccination priority list in group 6 - make sure you are registered as a carer with your GP. Read more [here](#). You can also find out where someone you care for is likely to be on the priority list [here](#).

[Carersuk](#)

Latest guidance for carers

[Essex Welfare Service](#)

The Essex Welfare Service is for people who are unable to access the support they need at

this time and is run by Essex County Council and Provide. Telephone: 0300 303 9988.

[Carers First](#)

Essex County Councils commissioned Carers Support service providing telephone and online support, wellbeing checks and helping carers to co-ordinate the support they need in their locality. Telephone: 0300 303 1555 or email hello@carersfirst.org.uk

[Action for Family Carers](#)

Provide support across Essex including telephone befriending (Essex Befriends) and support with health and wellbeing (Feeling Good Caring Well). Telephone 0300 770 8090. Email admin@essexcarerssupport.org.uk

[Essex Carers Support](#)

Providing a local point of contact and support for family carers living in North Essex. Telephone: 01255 474410. Email admin@essexcarerssupport.org.uk

[Facebook Essex Carers Support](#).

[Essex Carers Network](#)

Providing a point of contact and support for families, carer of a family member with a learning disability. Telephone 07876025480. [Facebook Essex Carers Network](#).

[Adult Social Care Connects](#)

For queries relating to social care needs for yourself and those you support, care packages and emergency plans. Telephone: 0345 603 7630. Textphone: 0345 758 5592. Email socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk.

[Feeling Good, Caring Well Project](#)

Supporting the emotional and physical wellbeing of Carers across Essex

[For guidance on caring for friends or family](#)

SUPPORT FOR OLDER PEOPLE

during the virus and what to do if you or the person you care for has symptoms

For information specifically related to people who look after someone, including resources and answers to frequently asked questions, please go to Carers UK Coronavirus page.

For learning disability specific support

Time 4 You

Particularly at this time more and more people are caring for a friend or family member with limited support; and without the chance to take a break and recharge their batteries.

If you, or someone you know is providing care for a friend or family member then call Essex Carers Support 01255 474410 to have a conversation with one of the team about ways to prioritise some 'me-time' and Essex Carers Support can pay up to £100 to help to achieve it. Afterwards they just need one more telephone conversation to know how it helped.

Stuck for ideas? Why not have a look on their website to see how others used their award?

<http://www.essexcarerssupport.org.uk>



Age Concern Colchester. Support includes befriending, the advice service, care in the community, bereavement befriending and dedicated dementia support. For more information, contact us at: 01206 368420 option 3 or

befriending@ageconcerncolchester.org.uk

The Warm and Toasty Club. is a unique life-affirming intergenerational community group working in music, arts and history with people over 60 and in supporting young emerging music artists. A good way to see their latest work is via their Facebook page. They hold online Memory Afternoons which are live on Facebook every Friday at 1pm. Do join them for chat, live music and general fun and frolics.

The Silver Line is the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK, open every day and night of the year. You may call for a chat, to say Good Night or Good Morning to someone, or to tell someone how your day was. You may also call for information, seek advice about something, or share a concern or worry. Call: 0800 470 8090. Email: info@thesilverline.org.uk

Essex Befriends. Whether you are feeling lonely, isolated, stopped doing things you once loved or generally lack in confidence, Essex Befriends is here to help. It offers befriending services to people over 18 and who are carers, older people, those experiencing mental ill health or who have a learning disability.

They are currently making most of their contacts by phone, video call, e-mail or text. Where appropriate and safe, Befrienders can also meet the person they are Befriending in outside spaces.

If volunteering as a Befriender is of interest to you please apply via the Essex Befriends website. Call: 0300 770 1263 Email: essexbefriends@affc.org.uk

STAY SAFE, WELL, WARM AND CONNECTED.

ONE Colchester's 2020/21 Winter Resilience Information Booklet and Flyer is now ready to download. Your guide to organisations providing services which help those in Colchester who are most vulnerable to the cold this winter. Stay Safe, Well, Warm and Connected this Winter. [Read more here and to download the brochure](#)

Keep your home warm

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

Make sure your boiler has been serviced. This will ensure it is working properly, is safe and running efficiently as possible

Don't block up air vents, as fires and heaters need ventilation. Good ventilation also helps to prevent condensation

Make sure radiators are not obstructed by furniture or curtains

Keep your main living room heated at approx. 21°C (70F) and the rest of your home at least 18°C (65F)

Purchase a carbon monoxide detector if you use gas or oil appliances and test your smoke alarms every week. To arrange a free home fire safety visit call: 0300 303 0088 or visit: www.essex-fire.gov.uk/Home_Fire_Safety/

Stay connected

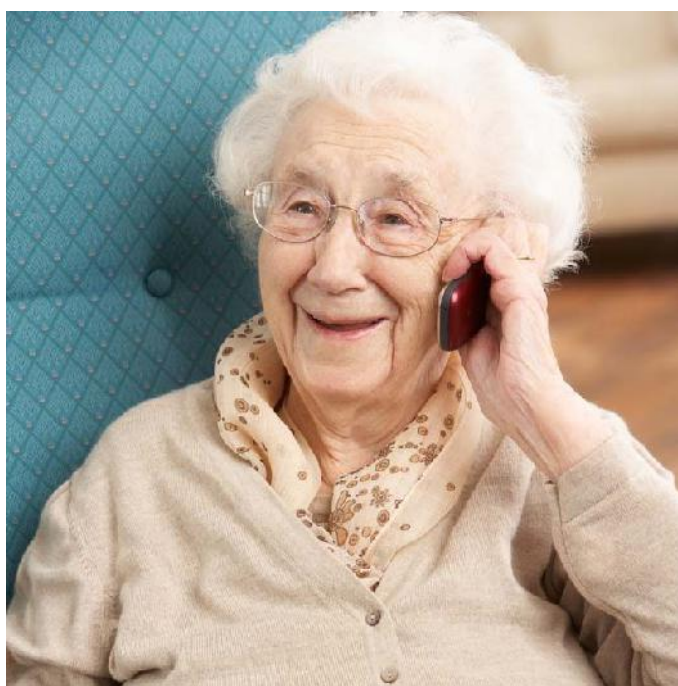
Community360's [Community Transport](#) scheme provides a door to door service to and from doctor, dental & hospital appointments, medical centres, shopping centres, and encourages visits to therapy, friends and

relatives. In addition, we offer a range of hugely popular excursions offering the opportunity for members to meet new people, enjoy good health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation. For more information email ct@community360.org.uk

[The Digital Access Support Team](#) offer a free digital support service that helps you gain basic skills and confidence using today's smart technology. They host community-based events, including drop-in sessions as well as one to ones. You can also find them supporting your online needs at local surgeries.

For more information on what we do click on one of the options below to find out more or contact us on 01206 282 452 / 01255 686497 or digital.accesssupport@colchester.gov.uk.

[Age UK Essex](#). Their weekly telephone calls are the perfect opportunity to relax in your own home and have a good catch up over a cup of tea with one of their befrienders. This service is free of charge so please call on 01268 525353



C360 SLIPPER EXCHANGE

Singing online Golden-Oldies members of the 24 Essex monthly groups can now access free online sing-along sessions every Tuesday and Thursday at 11am on You Tube. Further details from 01761 470006.

Independent Age. There are a number of ways they can support you. For instance you can call the Helpline to talk about how they can help, or to arrange a call with one of their expert advisers. You can also arrange to receive a regular phone call or visit from one of their volunteers. Helpline 08003196789

The Dance Network Association The Dance Network Association CIC (DNA) is a dance organisation that is dedicated to delivering dance in the community to increase the health and wellbeing of the people it serves in the East of England. To access their 'Dancing Through.... (Lockdown with DNA) season including Dancing with Parkinson's, Take a seat lets Dance, and Dancing with Dementia. All sessions are via zoom and free.
info@dancenetworkassociation.org.uk
07490374717

Colchester Arts Centre— Dial a Poem Service. Offering a phone call, a poem and a chat to people who may be lonely. Telephone 07814695598

Arthritis Action: UK charity offering hands-on, practical help for people with arthritis to improve their quality of life whilst living with the condition. We offer our Members healthy eating advice, clinical appointments, exercise tips and pain management techniques whether or not they are having medical treatment. We also hold Arthritis Action Groups both face to face, and online to help those living with arthritis share tips, tricks, and experiences with one another. Phone: 0203 781 7120 Email: info@arthritisaaction.org.uk Website: www.arthritisaaction.org.uk

Old, sloppy, misshapen slippers have been proven to contribute to falls in older people and Community360 are holding a series of Slipper Exchange events in order to identify people who are at risk of falls and provide them with a free pair of slippers.

To qualify recipients need to be living in the CO postcode and have a health condition that affects balance or mobility.

They will be distributing slippers from the One Colchester Community Hub 4—6 Long Wyre Street, CO1 1LH. Email information@community360.org.uk for further information



SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Where to find information

Essex University: Find the latest updates on the COVID-19 situation for applicants, students and staff

Essex University: COVID 19 Student directory
Office for students FQA's

Department of Education FAQ's for university students

Department for Education helpline

The Department for Education has launched a helpline to answer questions about coronavirus related to education. Higher education staff, students and parents can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Their opening hours are:

0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday

1000 to 1600 Saturday and Sunday.

Student Minds. Have developed a new platform, **Student Space**, collaboratively with services, higher education professionals, researchers and students to make it easier for you to find the support that you need during the coronavirus pandemic. There are three ways that Student Space is here to help during the pandemic:

- Access to dedicated support services for students, by phone or text
- Information and tools to help you through the challenges of coronavirus
- Helping you find what support is available at your university

YoungMinds: Tips if you are struggling to settle into university during the COVID-19 pandemic.

FINANCIAL HELP

Check on the student finance calculator to see what extra help you might be able to get.

Students on a low income

You can apply for:

Universal Credit

extra help if you're experiencing financial hardship

Students with children or dependent adults

You can apply for:

Childcare Grant - full-time students only

Parents' Learning Allowance - full-time students only

Adult Dependents' Grant - full-time students only

Universal Credit

extra help if you're experiencing financial hardship

Disabled students

If you have a disability, long-term health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) you can apply for:

Disabled Students' Allowance

extra help if you're experiencing financial hardship

You may also qualify for disability related benefits.

Medical, social work and teacher training students

You can apply for:

NHS bursaries if you're studying certain medical, dentistry or healthcare courses

help with costs of travel to UK clinical placements if you're studying a medical, dentistry or healthcare course

social work bursaries if you're a social work student

extra help if you're a teacher training student

Students studying abroad

You might get a grant to cover some travel expenses if you normally live in England but study away from home.

Help from your university or college

Many universities and colleges offer extra money directly to students.

Funding from charitable trusts

Use the Turn2us grant search to check whether you qualify for funding from a charitable trust.

CULTURAL FOOD OUTLETS IN COLCHESTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Starry Mart: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, Malaysian, Singapore, Vietnamese, Filipino and Thai Cuisines. 143 Caelum Dr, Colchester CO2 8FN. 01206 865438

Choice Foods Colchester. African, Caribbean & Asian popular foods. You can shop online and pay in store. You can also text your order. Open Monday - Saturday 10:00am - 7:00pm. 37 St Botolph's St, Colchester, CO2 7DU. 01206 766182.

Food INC. A supermarket, that specializes in world foods. Has one of the largest selections of rice, spice, lentils, frozen food and world foods in Essex. This includes Asian, Afro-Caribbean, Middle eastern and Mediterranean foods. There is also an onsite independent halal butchery. 66 Barrack St, Colchester CO1 2LS Phone 01206 868588

Feng Huang Asian Grocery. Asian products: China, Philippines, Thailand, Korea Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia.

6 Queen St, Colchester CO1 2PJ 01206 549029

May May Oriental Supermarket. 30 St Botolphs St, Colchester, CO2 7EA 01206 769668

Dhaulagiri Store. 7, Century House North, Station Road, Colchester CO1 1RE 01206 619264

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

Many people in Colchester will sadly experience bereavement, grief and loss during the corona virus pandemic. Measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 may increase the emotional impact of losing somebody, whether as a result of the virus or not. Bereaved people may feel more isolated and cut off from support networks.

It is important that family, friends and communities seeking support at this time can talk to somebody they trust who will listen, empathise and point them to professional advice where necessary.

There are many online sources of trusted information and support in relation to bereavement and a number of these can be found by following the links opposite.

For those that require more structured support we suggest you contact your GP but you can also contact St Helena Hospice who provide clinical bereavement support. The Hospice team will talk to you about your bereavement and help to identify the right source of support. Contact detail are below.

St Helena Hospice SinglePoint Members of the public, patients, relatives, carers, GPs and other health and social care professionals can get advice and support over the phone 24/7 with regards anyone who may be in the last year of life or who have specialist palliative care needs. Call SinglePoint on 01206 890360.

SUDDEN: The charity support service Sudden has a bereavement helpline you can call on 0800 2600 400 if someone you know has died. It's open from 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. They can give you advice, guidance and practical support during this difficult time.

[St Helena - Bereavement support leaflet](#)

[Essex County Council Coronavirus-and-faith/bereavement-support](#)

[NHS - Coping with bereavement](#)

[Curse Bereavement Care](#)

[Greater Essex Bereavement support in the community leaflet](#). Includes faith contacts within the community who can provide a listening ear and help sign post you to other support

[ACC's COVID-19 Crisis Counselling Support Service](#)

Faith Action has links to [coronavirus advice from leading faith organisations](#)

BAMEStream Bereavement Support Service is now available

[BAMEStream](#) is an alliance of practitioners, therapists, policy specialists, organisations, activists and academia who specialise in the areas of mental health and wellbeing and who's core purpose during this COVID-19 pandemic is to bring the mental health needs of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community into the mainstream. **A FREE Bereavement Support Service** has now been launched. It is being provided by our BAMEStream alliance member [Nafsiyat Intercultural Therapy Centre](#). Nafsiyat will provide FREE culturally competent brief emotional online support to anyone from a Black, Asian or other Minority Ethnic background experiencing bereavement and loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They offer therapeutic support in over 20 different languages. If you have been affected by the death of a loved one due to COVID-19 and need support, please visit www.bamestream.org.uk

Nafsiyat Intercultural Therapy – 020 7263 6947

INFORMATION AND TRANSLATED ADVICE FOR NON ENGLISH SPEAKING RESIDENTS

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Boloh: The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic family COVID-19 Helpline. Phone 0800 1512605

Light the Bubble Counselling: A multi-faiths, multi-ethnic and multi-languages counselling service in Colchester. Counselling- 07593659264

BAMEstream: offer bereavement support to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) adults who have been affected by the death of a loved one due to Covid-19.

BAATN (The Black, African and Asian Therapy Network)

BAATN formed due to the pandemic and the death of George Floyd, followed by a spout of police brutality killings of Black Americans - that gained global attention. The disproportionate number of deaths as well as dealing with witnessing traumatic deaths, known as vicarious trauma, led them to form a collective of culturally appropriate therapists. They are now the "UK's largest independent organisation to specialise in working psychologically, informed by an understanding of intersectionality." You can find a therapist or service through BAATN as their network platforms a range of services from free to paid.

Spark & Co.

Spark & Co. was founded amidst the pandemic after seeing there was a disproportionate negative effect on racialised communities. It is an online resource hub that collates various services, organisations and information to provide support in many areas.

Spark & co have a specific directory of resources that can aid when dealing with

bereavement and grief.

COVID vaccines: Misleading claims targeting ethnic minorities. BBC News article

Leading BAME doctor urges others to say yes to the vaccine.

TRANSLATED INFORMATION

Suffolk and North East Essex COVID-19 Vaccination service

NHS England has produced videos of clinicians recording messages in some of the most commonly spoken languages to help ensure messages about the importance of getting a COVID-19 vaccine are clear for all. Public Health England has also shared printable leaflets on COVID-19 vaccine information in various community languages.

Click here to watch or download leaflets :<https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/covid-19-vaccine-communication-materials/>

BBC video content in 5 South Asian languages now available:

- [NHS test and trace](#)
- [Vaccine explainer](#)
- [Vaccine Q&A](#)
- [Vaccine myth busting](#)

NHS COVID Pass

Translated versions about what the NHS COVID pass letter tells you

NHS inform: Health information in different languages and formats. Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Slovak, Spanish and Urdu

Suffolk and North East Essex COVID 19 Vaccination Service. COVID-19 vaccination information in other languages

Coronavirus easy to read guides in other languages

Translated guidance and infographics on COVID-19 in 26 languages.

Translations of NHS and WHO advice surrounding COVID-19

GOV.UK– Guidance for households with possible corona virus infection. Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, French, Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Urdu

Race Equality Foundation. COVID translated materials resources.

Dr's of the World - Latest Government advice translated into 60 languages Doctors of the World is pleased to be able to offer coronavirus (COVID-19) translated resources in 60 languages, which were produced in partnership with the Red Cross.

New wellbeing guidance with tips and advice for migrants is now available in 27 languages [here](#).

Visit their [You Tube channel](#).

COVID-19 infographics. Created by a group of doctors, medical students and volunteers, infographics to help summarise key points about COVID-19 in a variety of languages to get the right information, in an easy to understand format, to these communities.

ECC Advice for people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. Research by Public Health England shows that if you are from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background you are at a greater risk of both catching, becoming seriously ill and dying from coronavirus (COVID-19).

Find some things you and others can do to protect yourself and your family from coronavirus in 8 different languages.

GMCVO Information and advice. The Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO) has collected coronavirus information and sources of support. These include links to audio and written translated guidance for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

Advice for migrants. The East of England Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP) have produced COVID-19 information for migrants. This covers healthcare, settlement, visas and checks, and translated guidance on staying safe and seeking help during the outbreak.

Coronavirus and work FAQ's translated by the Work Rights Centre. If you need to know how your rights are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic they have addressed the most common issues on this page. English, Română, Português, Русский, Polski, Български, Italiano, Español.

Domestic abuse: get help during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Translated and easy read versions of guidance on getting help if you or someone you know is a victim of domestic abuse.

Access support for domestic abuse during COVID: simple advice translated. Migration Yorkshire has produced simple information on how to access domestic abuse services for people who feel unsafe in their home during covid-19

Information is available in Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, English, Farsi, French, Hungarian Italian, Kurdish Sorani, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Romanian, Spanish, Tigrinya - with more languages to come.

Modern slavery and COVID-19: What to look out for and how to get help - translated into 11 languages. Translated guidance on Modern Slavery. English, Arabic, Amharic, Kurdish, Farsi, Albanian, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Spanish, Urdu, Mandarin.

Resources and links in South Asian languages providing advice during the coronavirus pandemic.

Gypsy, Roma Travellers. Guidance for people who live on Traveller sites, live on the roadside in vehicles or live on canal boats who have symptoms of coronavirus.

Stay well this winter - the national flu campaign. Download or order resources, such as leaflets, posters, guides and resource packs for all campaigns

Flu vaccination for children: leaflets and posters. Information and promotional resources to support the annual flu vaccination programme.

Public Health England has also produced a leaflet about the use of porcine gelatine in vaccinations. Translated versions are also available.

OM COVID-19 Migrant Information Service. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has set up the COVID-19 Migrant Information Service, an online platform that provides multilingual information on COVID-19 measures and support in the UK context. The aim is to provide information to migrants living in the UK about Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the various ways the virus and the associated government responses could affect their lives.

The information service includes:

- a multilingual website available in eight languages with information on health; and

- a telephone service providing information to callers in any language from 10:00-12:00 and 14:00-16:00 Monday to Friday: **0800 464 3380**.

Race Equality Foundation: A national resource of written and audio translated materials of the guidance on coronavirus and other information to support those with dementia, their families and carers.

The materials have been translated into the following languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Kurdish, Punjabi, Portuguese, Polish, Somali, and Urdu.



COMMUNITY360 VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering can enhance your life, the lives of others and make a big difference to your local community

Volunteering can be an extremely rewarding experience both for you and the people whose lives you help to change and improve.

We make it easy to find the right volunteering opportunity for you with a wide range of roles and projects available to suit everyone's needs. Roles are as varied as talking newspaper reader, treasurer, substance abuse mentor, befriender, gardener and many more ...

You will:

- Make a difference.
- Improve quality of life.
- Create a social and friendly environment.
- Provide essential support.
- Reduce demand on public services.

Plus:

- Have fun and meet new people.
- Gain confidence and increase self esteem.
- Follow your interests.
- Stay active.
- Learn and develop new skills.

We help people to identify appropriate opportunities and match them with what organisations need, thus supporting the local community to achieve their goals. This means we work with:

- Charities and organisations from small local groups to large national charities. Their diverse work supports the areas of animal welfare, conservation, health and social care, women's groups, arts and

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Need help to get to your vaccine appointment?

Will take members **and non-members** to medical appointments including vaccines. They charge £1 per trip to non-members if you are using them as a one off. If you need more regular help with transport then you will need to join as a member.

culture, disability, youth, education and disaster relief, to name but a few.

- One off events such as carnivals, fun runs or a Christmas lights switch on. Whatever events may be happening in your local area we can help to support.
- Social activities and clubs: scout groups, job clubs, coffee mornings, sports teams, and Time Banking

Contact us to find out more.

information@community360.org.uk or call 01206 505250

Or search for opportunities at volunteersex.org



URGENT NEED FOR VACCINATION AND WINTER RESILIENCE VOLUNTEERS

With the proposed expansion of the Covid-19 Booster Vaccinations, Community360 are urgently seeking more volunteers to come forward and help with the rollout.

Volunteers are needed to help ensure the smooth running of the vaccination clinics that now include the roll out of the booster jabs.

There are a range of tasks on offer from sanitising seats to ensuring that individuals have waited long enough to be able to receive their next vaccine. C360 continue to cover a range of sites across Colchester including GP surgeries along with supermarkets and pop ups using the vaccination bus.”

This is also an opportunity to chat to people attending and to check on the welfare of those who attend and identify if they would benefit from any additional support. Other tasks involve answering questions on what will happen, guiding them or just giving a friendly smile and allowing them to share a story.

Community360 are also looking to recruit Winter Resilience Ambassadors. This role will help to support their winter work to ensure that Colchester residents remain safe, warm and well during the winter months. From supporting with preparation and distribution of winter packs, to getting out into the community to have conversations and offer signposting, advice and guidance to those who need it.

Winter resilience ambassadors will be able to attend events to increase awareness of the support available and have meaningful conversations with Colchester residents throughout the winter months.

For further information on how to enquire about becoming a Vaccination Marshall or Winter Resilience Ambassador Volunteer contact: 01206 505250

Email: information@community360.org.uk
<https://www.community360.org.uk/services/volunteering/>

SUPPORTING RECOVERY—HOME FROM HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS URGENTLY NEEDED.

Community360 are helping patients to settle back into life at home when they leave hospital thanks to their Home from Hospital service which operates out of Colchester NHS Trust. This service supports discharged patients with ‘light touch support’ and getting back on their feet with the help and time of volunteer befrienders.

The escorted home service enables patients with limited mobility to be settled back home safely by a member of Colchester Hospital’s therapies team, who checks they have everything they need following their hospital stay, such as equipment. Older people returning home from hospital without enough support are more than twice as likely to be readmitted within three months. But this can be avoided. With the right support, improvements in cognition and physical function can be achieved. The Home from Hospital service targets and prioritises at-risk people, or who are over 75, living alone, with a carer or co-carer, with limited or no social support or social care. Friendly, encouraging support from a volunteer at this time can make all the difference to restoring essential self-confidence, leading to improved health and wellbeing and reducing readmissions.

Want to find out more: Call 01206 505250 or email mshp@community360.org.uk

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEER CODE OF PRACTICE

Do

- Practice infection control measures, including social distancing and wearing PPE (where advised).
- Visibly display your identification.
- Be courteous, recognise vulnerable people may be stressed and anxious.
- Respect people's needs, culture and customs.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- If using your own vehicle, ensure this is done so safely and legally.
- Carry your mobile phone and ensure someone knows where you are.

DON'T

- Continue volunteering if you develop symptoms.
- Go into people's houses.
- Take any payment for services or goods provided, unless following specific instruction.
- Offer advice on benefits.
- Fill in forms on their behalf.
- Request any personal or financial information about the people you visit.
- Offer services beyond those instructions you have received, including childcare or personal care.
- Contact or meet vulnerable people, except to carry out tasks you have been asked to perform.
- Share any personal information you have been given, including posting information on social media relating to vulnerable people, staff or other volunteers.

Consider, are you well enough to volunteer? Your safety and limiting the spread of the virus is a priority. Don't put yourself or others at unnecessary risk.

Hand hygiene is critical: Ensure you have access to handwashing facilities before and after every contact, or use hand sanitiser with 60% alcohol.

Delivering shopping and prescriptions:

Leave shopping and prescriptions at the doorstep. Knock at the door and wait 2m away. Wash or clean hands with sanitiser.

Money: Coronavirus can live on money for 24hrs. Where possible use electronic banking or shopping e-cards. Do not take credit or debit cards or PIN numbers.

VOLUNTEER ESSEX

Registration is now OPEN for any residents or businesses who want to volunteer in their local area. By using one of the forms below, your details will be passed directly to the group or groups that are operating near to you:

[INDIVIDUALS](#) [BUSINESSES](#)

[FACEBOOK GROUPS / VOLUNTEERING GROUPS](#)

[INVOLVING AND MANAGING VOLUNTEERS DURING THE](#)

[CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC](#) This website provides a wealth of information on working with volunteers during the current pandemic - from safeguarding, DBS checks, data protection, paying for goods and services and much more.

ANTIVIRALS TRIAL

If possible, wear gloves when handling money. Always clean your hands afterwards.

Lack of response: If you are supporting an elderly or vulnerable person you need to have an agreement on what to do if you arrive and there is no response. This will differ from person to person.

Other things to remember: People may well be lonely and may want you to come in and have a chat. You need to say no if you are going to protect them. You could stop and have chat at their doorstep as long as you are 2m away. You can also swap telephone numbers and let them know you are available for a chat if they are feeling anxious or lonely.

USEFUL LINKS

[What you need to know about data protection](#)

[Safeguarding guidance](#)

[Coronavirus: How to help safely.](#)

[COVID-19 guidance for voluntary, community and social enterprise.](#)

A GUIDE FOR COVID-19 RESPONDERS

For anyone in a supportive role during the pandemic from NHS workers to volunteers this guide covers topics such as Your well-being, Supportive communication in everyday interactions and supporting people who are experiencing stress. These basic skills are at the core of supporting the emotional well-being of others during this challenging time.

The guide will show you how to use these skills to look after yourself and how to help others feel supported through your interactions.

Oxford University and the NHS are calling on those eligible to consider coming forward for a world-first trial to find antiviral medicines to treat people with COVID-19.

The study is home-based, lasts for only 5 days, the antivirals are oral capsules and participants are free to withdraw at any time.

To be eligible you must have received a positive test for COVID-19 and feel unwell with symptoms that started in the last five days, as well as being over 50, or 18-49 with an underlying medical condition.

It's a world first opportunity to make a global impact and help us lives.

So visit panoramictrial.org to check if you're eligible and to find out how to sign up.



**The PANORAMIC
antiviral study
is recruiting
now for people
with COVID-19.**

If you are eligible to join, antiviral treatments are taken at home and could **help people with symptoms recover faster.**

Join the Hunt

for a new COVID-19 treatment
that will save lives.



If you tested positive for COVID-19 recently and meet the criteria below, you could be eligible.

What is an antiviral?

Antivirals are medicines used against viruses like COVID-19, to prevent more severe, or even critical, symptoms, and **reducing the chances, of those most at risk, of going to hospital.**

Why sign up to the trial?

The is a world first trial that could save lives by helping the NHS understand how to treat those infected with COVID-19, especially those who are at higher risk of complications. **It's also simple and convenient to take part.**

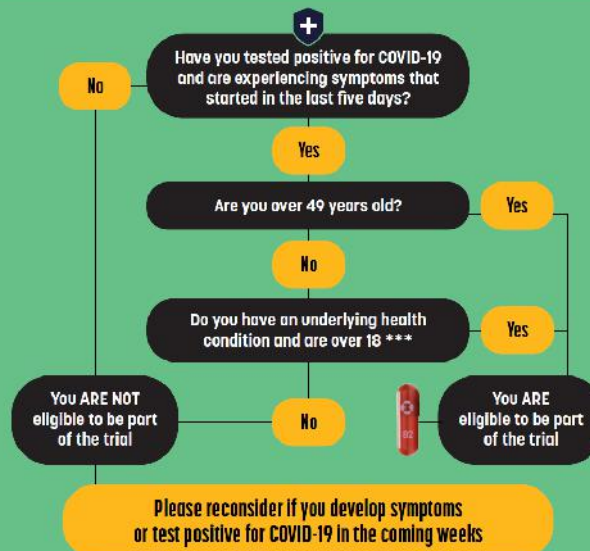
So what will I have to do?

You will be randomly selected to either receive usual NHS care, or usual NHS care and the antiviral treatment. If you are receiving an antiviral treatment, tablets will be delivered to your door, and is taken orally for five days. **It's very important that you finish this full five-day course.**

All participants will then later speak to the trial team about your COVID-19 symptom experience over the phone. **The antivirals used are safe and approved by the UK Medicines and Health Care Products Regulatory Agency.**

What's next?

Participants are urgently needed for the trial. **Take the questionnaire below to see if you are eligible.**



Sign up at www.panoramictrial.org
or call the freephone number
08081 560017

*** A full list of underlying health conditions can be found at nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/
*The MHRA regulates the use of all medicines in the UK, and is also approved by the Health Research Authority

UTILITIES

Pre-Payment cards

If you have payment cards for your electric, please see the following advice. This [link](#) has some good information on what each energy company is doing to support their customers, currently.

You can ask for pre-loaded payment cards to be sent to your house. Most energy companies have put a hold on any debt too.

ANGLIAN WATER

Have free Priority Register for the most vulnerable that provides the practical support. Aimed at a wide range of people, from those with sight, hearing or mobility difficulties, to parents with babies under 12 months old. Offers a wide range of support, such as reading meters for customers who find it difficult and sending out bills in Braille. Or if someone's struggling to pay a bill, they can set up payment plans or look at switching to a tariff that's a better fit. The website also has tips for saving water.

UK POWER NETWORKS

If you need information on a power cut, you can, visit Power Cut Map for [live updates](#), tweet them at @UKPowerNetworks or telephone customer service team, 24 hours a day, on 105 or 0800 3163 105. Calls are free from a landline or mobile phone. If you live in London, the East or South East of England, then being on the Priority Services Register will ensure you will receive extra support if you experience a power cut.

There are over 20 ways to get in touch including our website, on Twitter @ukpowernetworks, or call 105

If you're struggling to afford your energy bills, you might be able to take advantage of certain benefits, grants and help offered by the government and energy suppliers.

Winter Fuel Payment

The Winter Fuel Payment is an annual one-off payment to help you pay for heating during the winter.

You can usually get a Winter Fuel Payment if you were born on or before 26 September 1955.

Find how much you can get, and how to claim on GOV.UK.

Cold Weather Payments

Cold Weather Payments are one-off payments to help you pay for extra heating costs when it's very cold.

You'll get a payment each time the temperature drops below a specific temperature for a set period of time.

You'll only be eligible if you already get:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit

Find out more about [Cold Weather Payments](#) on GOV.UK.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

You might be able to get £140 off your electricity bill under the Warm Home Discount Scheme if you're either:

- getting the guarantee credit part of Pension Credit

Energy Supplies: Here you can find advice and answers to questions you may have on managing your energy

[Ofgem energy advice for households](#)

Tips for saving energy can be found here [Energy Saving Trust](#) and [uswitch](#)

- on a low income

Check with your supplier to see if they offer the Warm Home Discount - not all suppliers are part of the scheme.

If you've applied for the Warm Home Discount but you switch supplier before you get the payment, you have to apply again with your new supplier. Your new supplier might have different rules about who gets the discount. This doesn't affect you if you get the discount automatically, without having to apply.

Find out more about the [Warm Home Discount Scheme](#) on GOV.UK.

Grants to help pay off your energy debts

If you're in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to get a grant from a charitable trust to help pay it off.

The following energy companies offer grants and schemes that are **open to anyone**—you don't have to be a customer:

[British Gas Energy Trust](#)

There are also companies who offer grants specifically **for their customers**:

- [npower Energy Fund](#)
- [Scottish Power Hardship Fund](#)
- [Ovo Debt and energy assistance](#)
- [E.on Energy Fund](#)
- [EDF Energy Customer Support Fund](#)
- [Bulb Energy Fund](#)

When you apply for a grant, you'll have to provide detailed information about your financial situation in your application. It could take a while to complete, and it might be worth getting help from a friend or family member. You can also [talk to an adviser](#) for help filling in forms.

Before you apply

Charitable trusts like you to show that you have received [debt advice](#) before you apply. Debt advice can help you manage your debts and increase your chances of making a successful application.

Extra help from your supplier

You might be able to [get extra help and support from your energy supplier](#) by signing up to the Priority Services Register. You can sign up if you're a pensioner, disabled or sick, or if your energy network considers you 'vulnerable'.

They would be able to help you with things like:

- reading your energy meter
- moving your energy meter free of charge
- getting your bills sent or copied to someone else, e.g. a carer

Get help with bills and budgeting

If you're trying to cut your spending, or are having problems with your outgoings, you could [get help with bills](#). You could also [use our budgeting tool](#) to see exactly where your money goes each month.

Further help

You can [use the Simple Energy Advice calculator](#) to find out how you can improve your energy efficiency, and see schemes run by your local council.

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

[Consumer helpline](#) gives free, impartial advice to people who are worried about their energy costs and staying warm during winter.

You can also read our advice for steps you can take if you're [struggling to pay your energy bills](#).

Check GOV.UK to find out about:

- [grants and energy efficiency measures](#)
- [other benefits](#) you may be eligible for.

[Citizens Advice: Help with your energy bills](#)

What to do if you're struggling to pay your energy bills

If you're struggling to afford your gas and electricity bills, contact your supplier to discuss ways to pay what you owe them.

Your supplier has to help you come to a solution. You should try to negotiate a deal that works for both of you.

If you don't try to negotiate with your supplier, they might threaten to [disconnect your supply](#).

This page can help you if you pay for your energy after you use it - for example by monthly direct debit or quarterly bill. There are different things you should do if [you can't afford to top up your prepayment meter](#).

Agree a payment plan with your supplier

Tell your supplier that you want to pay off your debts in instalments as part of a payment plan.

You'll pay fixed amounts over a set period of time, meaning you'll pay what you can afford. The payment plan will cover what you owe plus an amount for your current use.

Your supplier must take into account:

- **how much you can afford to pay** - give them details about your income and outgoings, debts and personal

circumstances

- **how much energy you'll use in future** - they'll estimate this based on your past usage, but give them regular meter readings to make this more accurate

If you're not sure how much you can afford to pay, use this [budgeting tool](#) to help you.

If you can't afford the payment plan

Speak to your supplier again if you think they're charging you too much or you're struggling to afford the repayments. You can try to negotiate a better deal. If you don't, your supplier might make you have a [prepayment meter installed](#).

Pay off your debt through your benefits

You might be able to repay your debt directly from your benefits through the Fuel Direct Scheme.

A fixed amount will automatically be taken from your benefits to cover what you owe, plus an extra amount for your current use.

It can be more convenient than having a prepayment meter fitted (which your supplier might try to do if you can't agree a payment plan) and you won't risk running out of gas or electricity.

To be eligible, you must be getting one of the following benefits:

- Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit (but only if you're not working)

Contact the [Jobcentre](#) and let them know you want to set up Fuel Direct. They'll contact your

supplier and tell them you want to pay off your debt under the Fuel Direct Scheme - your supplier must agree to it.

Your supplier will set up the repayments and let you know how much you'll be paying.

If you don't come to an agreement

If you're not able to agree a payment plan with your supplier, or you don't stick to a plan you previously agreed to, your supplier might try to force you to have a prepayment meter installed.

In very rare cases your supplier might threaten you with disconnection.

Extra financial help

There are a number of energy companies who offer grants and schemes that are **open to anyone**—you don't have to be a customer.

You might be able to get a grant from a charitable trust to help pay off your debts. Let's Talk has more information on available grants

and how to apply.

If you're disabled, elderly or you get benefits, check whether you can get other help paying your energy bills.

Further help

If you can't come to an agreement with your supplier about repaying your debt, or you're not happy with the option they've given you, contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline for advice.

If you're struggling with debt problems, check how to get help with debt.

An advertisement for the Citizens Advice Bureau. On the left, a white curved banner contains the text 'Struggling with your energy bills?' in large blue font, followed by 'We can help' in teal. Below this, in smaller black font, it says 'To find the best energy deal for you, or for help with your energy issues visit your local CAB'. To the right of the text is the Citizens Advice Bureau logo, a blue circle with a white exclamation mark and the words 'citizens advice bureau' in yellow. The background of the advertisement shows a man in an orange shirt sitting at a desk with a laptop, holding a baby on his lap. The image is slightly blurred to focus on the text.

Struggling with your energy bills?

We can help

To find the best energy deal for you, or for help with your energy issues visit your local CAB

citizens advice bureau

KEEP WARM DURING WINTER

You're at greater risk of illness in cold weather if you:

- are aged over 65
- are on a low income (and find heating difficult to afford)
- have a long-term health condition such as heart, lung or kidney disease
- have a disability

Wrap up warm

Dress in layers and wear a hat, gloves and scarf. Clothes made from wool, cotton or fleecy fabrics are warmest. When you're indoors, wear warm socks and slippers to keep feet cosy.

Keep cold out

Close doors and use a key hole cover to block draughts. Buy thermal curtains to keep heat in.

Don't use alcohol to keep warm.

Avoid drinking alcohol before going, or when outside. It makes you feel warm because blood vessels in the skin expand, but this draws heat away from your vital organs.

Check heating

Have your heating system serviced regularly to make sure it works.

Maintain the temperature

Keep your main living room at 18-21°C (64-70°F) and the rest of the house at 16°C at least. If you can't heat all the rooms you use, heat the living room during the day and the just before you go to sleep.

Stay warm at night

- Keep the temperature above 18°C (65°F) in your bedroom.
- If you use a fire or heater in your bedroom

during winter, open the window or door a little at night for ventilation.

- Wear bed socks and thermal underwear at night
- To prevent the risk of electrocution, avoid using an electric blanket with a hot water bottle.
- To prevent the risk of scalds or burns, make sure you fill your hot water bottles with warm water - never use boiling water.

If you have an electric blanket:

- Check what type it is – some are designed to only warm the bed before you get in and should not to be used throughout the night.

Have warming food and drinks

Have regular hot drinks and food such as porridge, soups and stews.

Stay active

Keep as active as possible to boost your circulation. Move around at least once an hour and avoid sitting still for long periods. Even light



CBC EMERGENCY HEATER SCHEME

exercise will help keep you warm. When you do sit down, put your feet up as it's coldest nearest the ground.

Check what support you can get

Don't miss out on benefits. Depending on your circumstances you may get the Winter Fuel or Cold Weather Payments automatically. If you don't, visit gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment or call **03459 15 15 15** to see if you're eligible.

You may also be entitled to claim an Affordable Warmth Grant, which could help with heating and insulation improvements. For more information, call the Energy Saving Advice Service on **0300 123 1234** or visit gov.uk/energy-company-obligation.

The Emergency Heating Scheme is offered by Colchester Borough Council's Warm Homes Project with the aim to provide temporary emergency heaters when there is a need and if no alternative arrangement can be made.

To be eligible for this scheme you must be a Colchester Borough private home owner or tenant* in need of emergency heating and must be in the process of making arrangements to resolve your home heating situation.

You must need temporary extra heating due to one or more of the following reasons:

- Heating system has broken down
- Current heating provision is insufficient for health needs
- No suitable alternative heating source
- Health has deteriorated to an extent that more heating is required to prevent a potential 'crisis' situation

Other Points:

- There is a maximum of 3 heaters per household
- The heating situation and loan will be reviewed on a monthly basis
- Free delivery and collection
- Delivery available 7 days a week

**If you are a Colchester Borough Homes or Social Housing tenant, please make enquires with your social housing provider directly.*

Contact the Warm Homes Project

Phone: 01206 505341

Email: warmhomes@colchester.gov.uk



COVID 19: KEEPING YOURSELF AND OTHERS SAFE

COVID-19 remains a risk

It is still possible to catch and spread COVID-19, even if you are fully vaccinated. If you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test result, the public health advice is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

COVID-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to learn to live with it and manage the risk to ourselves and others.

All of us can play our part by understanding the situations where risks of COVID-19 infection and transmission are likely to be higher, and taking action to reduce these risks.

Following this guidance will help you to understand situations where there is a greater risk of catching or spreading COVID-19 and the steps that you can take to stay safe and protect others. Every action you can take to help reduce the spread will help reduce pressure on the NHS during the winter months.

Understanding the risks of COVID-19

The risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 can be higher in certain places and when doing certain activities. COVID-19 is spread by airborne transmission, close contact via droplets, and via surfaces. Airborne transmission is a very significant way that the virus circulates. It is possible to be infected by someone you don't have close contact with, especially if you're in a crowded and/or poorly ventilated space.

Close contact with an infected person is also a significant way COVID-19 is spread. When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles containing the virus that causes COVID-19. The particles can come into contact with the eyes, nose or mouth or can be breathed in by another person. The particles can also land on surfaces and be passed from person to person via touch.

In general, the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 is higher in crowded and enclosed spaces, where there are more people who might be infectious and limited fresh air.

In situations where there is a higher risk of catching or passing on COVID-19, you should be particularly careful to follow the guidance on keeping yourself and others safe. Every little action helps to keep us all safer.

Keeping yourself and others safe

There are still cases of COVID-19 in England and there is a risk you could catch or pass on the virus, even once you are fully vaccinated. This means it is important that you understand and consider the risks of catching or spreading COVID-19 in all situations.

While no situation is risk free, there are easy and effective actions you can take to protect



yourself and others around you.

If you are worried about going back to a more 'normal' life, there is information from the NHS on [how to cope with anxiety about lockdown lifting](#).

Get vaccinated

All adults in England have now been offered at least 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and all eligible adults have now also been offered a booster. The vaccines are safe and effective. Getting your initial course of a COVID-19 vaccine and a booster is the best way of protecting yourself and others against COVID-19.

If you have not yet received 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, you should [get vaccinated](#). Evidence indicates that 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine continues to provide protection against severe disease, including against Omicron, but this protection declines slowly over time. Boosters provide a high level of protection against Omicron. You should therefore get a booster vaccine for COVID-19 as soon as possible.

Whilst the vaccines, particularly booster doses, provide a high level of protection against severe disease, hospitalisation and death, it is still possible to get COVID-19 and to pass it on to others. We all need to do what we can to

reduce the spread of COVID-19 to protect others and to reduce the risk of new variants developing and spreading.

Following the advice in this guidance will help you to protect your friends, family, and communities.

Let fresh air in if you meet indoors. Meeting outdoors is safer

When a person infected with COVID-19 coughs, talks or breathes, they release droplets and aerosols which can be breathed in by another person. Meeting outdoors vastly reduces the risk of airborne transmission, but this may not always be possible. If you're indoors, you should let fresh air in to reduce the risk of catching or spreading COVID-19. This is particularly important before, during, and after meeting people you do not live with indoors.

Do not prop fire doors open. If you have an extractor fan at home, for example in your bathroom or kitchen, think about leaving it running for longer than usual with the door closed after someone has used the room. If you are concerned about the costs of heating, opening windows for shorter periods of time can still help to reduce the risk of the virus spreading. Wearing extra layers can help you to keep warm. You may be able to change the



layout of your room so that you do not sit close to cold draughts from open windows or doors.

There is [guidance for the public on how to ventilate indoor spaces to stop the spread of COVID-19](#). This includes advice on how to claim financial and practical help on heating your home.

Consider wearing a face covering

COVID-19 spreads through the air by droplets and aerosols that are exhaled from the nose and mouth of an infected person. Whilst there is no longer a legal requirement to wear a face covering, the Government suggests that you continue to wear one in crowded and enclosed spaces, especially where you come into contact with people you do not usually meet, when rates of transmission are high. [Find out more information about face coverings](#).

Get tested and stay at home if you have symptoms

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a 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 (anosmia)

If you have any of these symptoms you should [order a PCR test](#). You are advised to stay at home, avoid contact with other people, and follow the [guidance for people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#) while you wait for your test result.

There is additional [guidance for people who have been informed by the NHS that they are at highest risk of becoming severely unwell](#) and who might be eligible for new COVID-19 treatments.

Stay at home and avoid contact with other people if you test positive

If you have COVID-19 you can infect other people from 2 days before your symptoms start, and for up to 10 days after. You can pass on the infection to others, even if you have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. If you have COVID-19 the public health advice is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. You should follow the [guidance for people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#).

Try to stay at home if you're feeling unwell

If you feel unwell but do not have COVID-19 symptoms, or your COVID-19 test is negative, you may still have an illness which could be passed on to other people. Many common illnesses, like the flu or the common cold, are spread from one person to another. This can happen:

- When someone infected with an illness breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, releasing respiratory particles which can cause infection in another person.
- Through surfaces and belongings which can also be contaminated when people who are infected with an illness cough or



sneeze near them or if they touch them, the next person to touch that surface may then become infected.

Staying at home until you feel better reduces the risk that you will pass on an illness to your friends, colleagues, and others in your community. This will help reduce the burden on our health services.

Consider taking a test if you do not have symptoms

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms. This means they could be spreading the virus without knowing it. Rapid lateral flow tests can be used to detect COVID-19 when you are infectious but are not displaying symptoms, helping you to make sure you do not spread COVID-19 by avoiding contact with others, particularly those who are at higher risk from COVID-19.

Rapid lateral flow testing continues to be available free of charge. You can get tests online or from pharmacies. [Find out more about how to get rapid lateral flow tests.](#)

You may wish to take rapid lateral flow tests as a way to manage your personal risk and the risk to those around you.

This may be particularly important before visiting people who are at higher risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19.

Report your result and if positive, [stay at home and avoid contact with others.](#)

Certain places such as health and social care settings and prisons may have their own specific testing rules and guidance. You should always make sure you are aware of this guidance if you visit or work in these places.

Wash your hands regularly and cover coughs and sneezes

Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day. Regular hand washing is an effective way to reduce your risk of catching illnesses, including COVID-19.

It is particularly important to wash your hands:

- After coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose.
- Before you eat or handle food.
- After coming into contact with surfaces touched by many others, such as handles, handrails and light switches.
- After coming into contact with shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- When you return home.

Where possible, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If you do need to touch your



face, for example to put on or take off your face covering, wash or sanitise your hands before and after.

Coughing and sneezing increases the number of droplets and aerosols released by a person, the distance they travel and the time they stay in the air. Covering coughs and sneezes will help reduce the spread of particles carrying COVID-19 and other viruses, including those that cause coughs and colds.

Working from home

The government is no longer asking people to work from home. People should now talk to their employers to agree arrangements to return to the office.

NHS COVID Pass

The NHS COVID Pass allows people to demonstrate their COVID-19 status to venues that decide to ask for it as a condition of entry. The app will allow people to generate a barcode that demonstrates that they are either fully vaccinated, have recorded a negative test

result in the previous 48 hours, or are exempt from vaccination.

Venues and events are no longer required by law to check visitors' NHS COVID Pass. However, some venues where large crowds gather or are in close contact may choose to continue to check the COVID-19 status of attendees and the workforce to keep everyone safer. [Find out more about using the NHS Covid Pass.](#)

Understanding your personal risk in different settings and scenarios

If you were previously identified as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)

Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be CEV are not being advised to shield again. If you were previously identified as CEV, [you should continue to follow the guidance contained in this page](#). You should take advice from your health professional on whether additional precautions are right for you.

[Find out more about how you can stay safe if your immune system means you are at a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19](#)

If you are pregnant

Pregnant women who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated are at higher risk of becoming severely ill and of pre-term birth if they contract COVID-19. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has now advised that pregnant women should be included as a clinical risk group within the vaccination programme.

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you are strongly recommended to get your COVID-19 vaccinations and booster as soon as possible. You should not delay vaccination until after you have given birth.



The COVID-19 vaccines available in the UK have been shown to be effective and to have a good safety profile. Over 100,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated. It is important to have your COVID-19 vaccinations to protect you and your baby.

Find out more information on COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Travelling in the UK and abroad

International travel

You must follow the rules for international travel.

Travelling to England from outside the UK

People planning to travel to England should follow the guidance on entering the UK.

Travelling in the UK, Ireland and Channel Islands

There are no restrictions on travel within England.

You should check the rules at your destination if you're planning to travel to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, or to Ireland or the Channel Islands as there may be restrictions in place.

Do not travel if you have COVID-19 symptoms or are self-isolating. Get a PCR test and follow the stay at home guidance.

Businesses and venues

All businesses should follow the principles set out in the working safely guidance.

Employers still have a legal duty to manage risks to those affected by their business. The way to do this is to carry out a health and safety risk assessment, including the risk of COVID-19, and to take reasonable steps to mitigate the risks you identify. The working safely guidance sets out a range of mitigations

employers should consider including:

- Identifying poorly ventilated areas in the venue, for example by using a CO2 monitor, and taking steps to improve air flow in these areas.
- Ensuring that staff and customers who are unwell do not attend the workplace or venue.
- Providing hand sanitiser to enable staff and customers to clean their hands more frequently, and cleaning surfaces that people touch regularly.
- Communicating to staff and customers the measures you have put in place.



COVID-19: GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WHOSE IMMUNE SYSTEM MEANS THEY ARE AT HIGHER RISK

This page includes specific guidance for people aged 12 and over whose immune system means they are at higher risk of serious illness if they become infected with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Who this guidance is for

Immunosuppression means you have a weakened immune system due to a particular health condition or because you are on medication or treatment that is suppressing your immune system. People who are immunosuppressed, or have specific other medical conditions, have a reduced ability to fight infections and other diseases, including COVID-19.

Most people in this group will be under the care of a hospital specialist.

People in this group, and who should follow this guidance on keeping yourself safe, have been identified in one of 2 ways:

1. Eligibility for a third primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
2. Eligibility for new treatments for COVID-19.

Further information on who is included in these 2 groups of people is included in the sections on vaccination and new treatments later.

Keeping yourself safe

If you are in one of these 2 groups, we advise you to:

- Ensure you have had all of the vaccines you are eligible to receive, including your booster.
- Continue to follow any condition-specific

advice you may have been given by your specialist.

- Work from home if you can. If you cannot work from home, speak to your employer about what temporary arrangements they can make to reduce your risk.
- Wait until 14 days after another person's most recent dose of a COVID-19 vaccine before being in close contact with them.
- Avoid enclosed crowded spaces.
- Practice social distancing if that feels right for you and your friends.
- Ventilate your home by opening windows and doors to let fresh air in.
- Ask friends and family to take a rapid lateral flow antigen test before visiting you.
- Ask home visitors to wear face coverings.
- Wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face.

If you are too ill to work, you may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay. Children and young people should attend education settings unless their clinician has advised otherwise

NHS Volunteer Responders are available to help with things like collecting shopping, medication, or other essential supplies, and with transport to medical appointments. They can also provide a regular, friendly phone call. More information is available online, or you can call 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm.

COVID-19 vaccines

A third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine is being offered to people aged 12 and over who had a weakened immune system when they had their

first 2 doses. As of 29 November, the government accepted advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) that people in the severely immunosuppressed group who have completed their primary course (3 doses) of COVID-19 vaccination will be due a booster (as a fourth dose) 3 months after administration of their third dose.

This includes people who had or may recently have had:

- A blood cancer (such as leukaemia or lymphoma).
- A weakened immune system due to a treatment (such as steroid medicine, biological therapy, chemotherapy or radiotherapy).
- An organ or bone marrow transplant.
- A condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections.
- A condition or treatment your specialist advises makes you eligible for a third dose.

JCVI has advised that household contacts of individuals who are immunosuppressed aged 5 to 11 are also now eligible for both doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty vaccine, with an 8-week dose interval.

More information is available in a [JCVI statement](#).

The NHS urges people who are immunosuppressed (and their household contacts) to come forward for any vaccine doses they are eligible for as a matter of urgency. We would strongly encourage you to take up this invite as soon as possible to ensure you have the highest possible level of protection.

Vaccination sites have been asked to ensure that appropriate arrangements and reasonable

adjustments are in place to reduce wait times for people who are severely immunosuppressed. Priority access at vaccination sites will be given to you and staff will be available to help.

Treatments

New treatments for COVID-19 are available through the NHS for people aged 12 and over who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are at highest risk of getting seriously ill in spite of being vaccinated.

This includes some people who have:

- Down's syndrome
- a rare condition affecting the brain or nerves (including multiple sclerosis, motor neurone disease, Huntington's disease or myasthenia gravis)
- sickle cell disease
- certain types of cancer
- HIV or AIDS
- a severe liver condition (such as cirrhosis)



JCVI advises
an extra spring booster for
adults over 75
residents in older
adults care homes
over-12s who are
immunosuppressed



- chronic kidney disease (CKD) stage 4 or 5
- had an organ transplant
- certain autoimmune or inflammatory conditions (such as rheumatoid arthritis or inflammatory bowel disease)
- a condition or treatment that makes you more likely to get infections
- had certain types of chemotherapy in the last 12 months
- had radiotherapy in the last 6 months

Most people in this group will receive a letter from the NHS nationally or from their care team confirming they might benefit from treatments and what steps to take. If you are in this group, a PCR test kit will be sent to your home, which you should keep in the event that you develop any COVID-19 symptoms. If you have not received your PCR kit by 10 January, you can contact 119 to order one.



Following a positive PCR test, most of these

patients will be contacted by a local NHS coronavirus medicines team to assess whether they might benefit from treatments.

However, some patients may not be automatically contacted. This situation may arise if a patient has only very recently had a diagnosis or started treatment, particularly for cancer. It may also apply to some conditions where the NHS does not hold good information centrally. In this case, your specialist should contact you with further information about accessing treatments.

These treatments need to be given quickly after you start to feel unwell. They can help to stop you from getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

If you're eligible for these treatments, have tested positive with a PCR test and are not contacted within 24 hours, you should contact your GP during opening hours or NHS 111 out of hours or at weekends.

 <h3>1. AM I AT RISK FROM COVID-19?</h3> <p>COVID-19 CAN MAKE ANYONE SERIOUSLY ILL. BUT FOR SOME PEOPLE, THE RISK IS HIGHER. GET VACCINATED TO PROTECT YOURSELF, YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.</p> <p>GET VACCINATED TO PROTECT YOURSELF, YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.</p>	<h3>3. ARE THERE SIDE EFFECTS?</h3> <p>LIKE ALL MEDICINES, COVID-19 VACCINES CAN CAUSE SIDE EFFECTS. MOST OF THESE ARE MILD AND CLEAR UP IN 24 HOURS. THE VACCINES ARE VERY SAFE, WHILE COVID-19 CAN MAKE ANYONE SERIOUSLY ILL.</p> 
<h3>2. DOES THE VACCINE WORK?</h3> <p>YES</p> <p>RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THE VACCINES HELP REDUCE YOUR RISK OF GETTING SERIOUSLY ILL OR DYING FROM COVID, OR CATCHING OR SPREADING IT.</p>	<h3>4. IS IT EASY TO GET THE VACCINE?</h3> <p>YES</p> <p>YOU CAN BOOK AN APPOINTMENT ONLINE OR BY CALLING 119 OR GO TO A DROP-IN SITE.</p>

COVID-19: PEOPLE WITH COVID-19 AND THEIR CONTACTS

There is no longer a legal requirement for people with coronavirus (COVID-19) infection to self-isolate, however if you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test result, the public health advice is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

The following advice is for:

- People with any of the main symptoms of COVID-19.
- People who have received a positive COVID-19 lateral flow device (LFD) or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test result.
- People who live in the same household as, or who have had close contact with, someone who has COVID-19

This also applies to children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting, with [additional information available for these settings](#).

There is separate guidance for those [working in health and social care settings](#).

Know the symptoms of COVID-19

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a 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 (anosmia)

If you have any of these symptoms you [should order a PCR test](#). You are advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people while you are waiting for the test result.

There is [additional guidance](#) for people who have been informed by the NHS that they are at highest risk of becoming severely unwell

and who might be eligible for new COVID-19 treatments.

Other symptoms linked with COVID-19 include shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle ache, sore throat, headache, stuffy or runny nose, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting. Any of these symptoms may also have another cause.

If you are concerned about your symptoms, or they are worsening, contact 111 or speak to your GP. In an emergency dial 999.

Most children and young people with COVID-19 experience a mild illness or do not have any symptoms at all. Children who have symptoms of COVID-19 are more likely to pass the virus onto others than those who do not.

It is still possible to catch and spread COVID-19, even if you are fully vaccinated. For most people, especially if they have been vaccinated, COVID-19 will be a relatively mild illness. However, COVID-19 can still be a very serious infection and for [some people the risk of becoming severely unwell is higher](#).

In some cases, COVID-19 can cause symptoms that last for weeks or months after the infection has gone. People who have had a mild illness can still have long-term problems.

What to do if you have COVID-19

The most effective way to avoid passing on COVID-19 infection is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release small particles (droplets and aerosols) that contain the virus that causes COVID-19. These particles can come into contact with the eyes,

nose or mouth or can be breathed in by another person. The particles can also land on surfaces and be passed from person to person via touch.

The risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 can be higher in certain places and when doing certain activities such as singing or vigorous exercise. In general, the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 is highest when you are physically close to someone who is infected.

However, it is possible to be infected even by someone you do not have close contact with, especially if you are in a crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated space. This is because the infectious particles can stay suspended in the air for some time.

People at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with COVID-19

COVID-19 can make anyone seriously unwell but for some people the risk is higher. For most of these people, this risk is significantly reduced by vaccination. The risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19 is very low for children and young people.

People who are known to be at higher risk from COVID-19 include:

- older people
- those who are pregnant
- those who are unvaccinated
- people of any age who have a severely weakened immune system
- people of any age with certain long-term conditions

You will not always know whether someone you come into contact with outside your home is at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell. They could be strangers (for example people you sit next to on public transport) or people you may have regular contact with (for example friends and work colleagues). This means it is important to follow the advice in this guidance to keep others safe.

If you have COVID-19, stay at home and avoid contact with other people

If you have COVID-19 you can infect other people from 2 days before your symptoms start, and for up to 10 days after. You can pass on the infection to others, even if you have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. If you have COVID-19 you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

You should:

- Not attend work. If you are unable to work from home, you should talk to your employer about options available to you. You may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay.
- Ask friends, family, neighbours or volunteers to get food and other essentials for you.
- Not invite social visitors into your home, including friends and family.



- Postpone all non-essential services and repairs that require a home visit.
- Cancel routine medical and dental appointments. If you are concerned about your health or you have been asked to attend an appointment in person during this time, discuss this with your medical contact and let them know about your symptoms or your test result.
- If you can, let people who you have been in close contact with know about your positive test result so that they can follow this guidance.

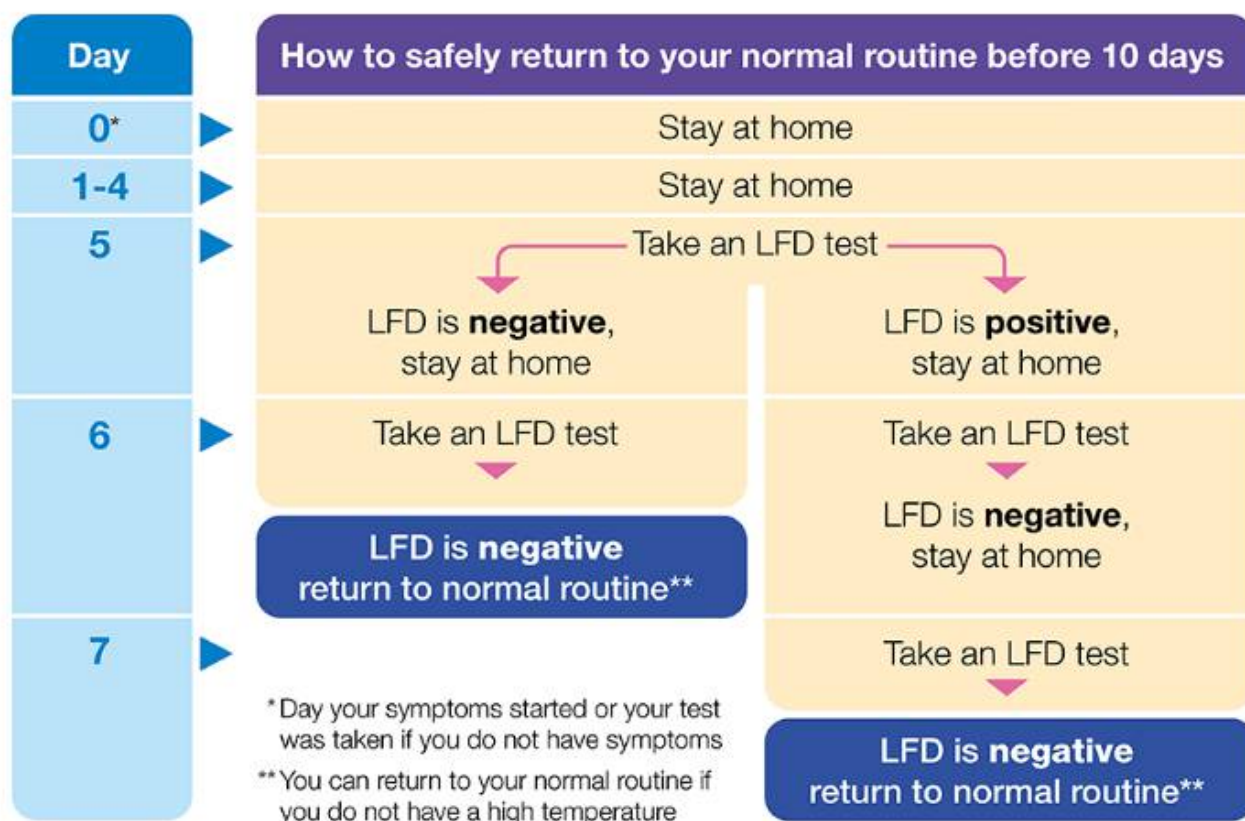
Many people will no longer be infectious to others after 5 days. You may choose to take an LFD test from 5 days after your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you did not have symptoms) followed by another LFD test the next day. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high

temperature, the risk that you are still infectious is much lower and you can safely return to your normal routine.

If your day 5 LFD test result is positive, you can continue taking LFD tests until you receive 2 consecutive negative test results.

Children and young people with COVID-19 should not attend their education setting while they are infectious. They should take an LFD test from 5 days after their symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms) followed by another one the next day. If both these tests results are negative, they should return to their educational setting if they normally attend one, as long as they feel well enough to do so and do not have a temperature. They should follow the guidance for their educational setting.

Avoid meeting people at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened



immune system, for the 10 days after your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you did not have symptoms).

While you are infectious there is a high risk of passing on COVID-19 to others in your household. These are simple things you can do to help prevent the spread:

keep your distance from other people you live with and spend as little time as possible in shared areas such as kitchens and living rooms. This is particularly important if someone you live with is unvaccinated or at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened immune system

if you need to spend time in shared areas wear a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask. Ventilate the room by opening windows and leaving them open for at least 10 minutes after you have left the room. Leave extractor fans running for longer than usual with the door closed after use

- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of tissues into a rubbish bag and immediately wash your hands or use hand sanitiser.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose and before you eat or handle food. Avoid touching your face.
- If you can, use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. If this is not possible try and use the bathroom after everyone else.
- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles and remote controls, and shared areas such as

kitchens and bathrooms.

GermDefence is a useful website that can help you identify ways to protect yourself and others in your household from COVID-19. It provides scientifically proven advice on reducing the risks from COVID-19 and other viruses in your home.

If you need to leave your home

The most effective way to avoid passing on COVID-19 infection is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. We understand that this is not always possible, but you should follow the guidance as closely as possible.

If you have COVID-19 and you need to leave your home while you are still infectious, you should take the following steps to reduce the chance of passing on the infection to others:

- Wear a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask.
- Avoid close contact with anyone you know who is at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened immune system.
- Avoid crowded places. If you need to take public transport, avoid busy times, for example by using off peak services.
- Avoid large social gatherings and events, or anywhere that is poorly ventilated, crowded, or enclosed.
- Limit close contact with other people outside your household as much as possible. Meet outside and try and stay at least 2 metres apart from them.
- Take any exercise outdoors in places where you will not have contact with other people.

- Be especially careful with your hand and respiratory hygiene.

What to do if you are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19

People who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 are at the highest risk of becoming infected because they are most likely to have prolonged close contact. People who stayed overnight in the household of someone with COVID-19 while they were infectious are also at high risk.

If you live with, or have stayed overnight in the household of, someone who has COVID-19, you are advised to:

- Minimise contact with the person who has COVID-19.
- Work from home if you are able to do so.
- Avoid contact with anyone you know who is at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened immune system.
- Limit close contact with other people outside your household, especially in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wear a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces and where you are in close contact with other people.
- Pay close attention to the main symptoms of COVID-19. If you develop any of these symptoms, order a PCR test. You are advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people while you are waiting for your test result.

Follow this advice for 10 days after the day the person you live or stayed with symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms).

Children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who live with someone who has COVID-19 should continue to attend the setting as normal.

If you are a contact of someone with COVID-19 but do not live with them or did not stay in their household overnight, you are at lower risk of becoming infected. Carefully follow the guidance on Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread.

Wellbeing and practical support while you are staying at home

Staying at home and avoiding contact with other people can be difficult, frustrating and lonely for some people. Remember to take care of your mind as well as your body and get support if you need it. Every Mind Matters provides simple tips and advice to take better care of your mental health.

The NHS Volunteer Responders programme is still available to help support those who need it.

Volunteers can collect and deliver shopping, medication and other essential supplies and can also provide a regular friendly phone call. Call 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm, 7 days a week to self-refer or visit NHS Volunteer Responders for further information.

There may also be other voluntary or community services in your local area that you can access for support.

FACE COVERINGS: WHEN TO WEAR ONE, EXEMPTIONS, AND WHAT MAKES A GOOD ONE

In England, face coverings are no longer required by law.

The government suggests that you continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where you may come into contact with other people you do not normally meet.

What a face covering is

In the context of the COVID-19 outbreak, a face covering is something that safely covers the nose and mouth.

Face coverings are primarily worn to protect others because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main sources of emission of the virus that causes coronavirus infection (COVID-19). They can also provide some protection to the wearer.

There are many types of face covering available.

What makes a good face covering

Face coverings work best if they are made with multiple layers (at least 2 and preferably 3) and form a good fit around the nose and mouth.

Scarves, bandanas or religious garments are likely to be less effective if they do not fit securely around the mouth and nose, and are of a single layer.

Valved masks or those with vents are not recommended as they do not filter exhaled air, so do not protect others.

The difference between face coverings and face masks

Face coverings are not classified as personal protective equipment (PPE), which is used in a limited number of settings to protect wearers against hazards and risks, such as surgical masks or respirators used in medical and

industrial settings.

[Find out more about the differences between surgical face masks, PPE face masks and face coverings](#)

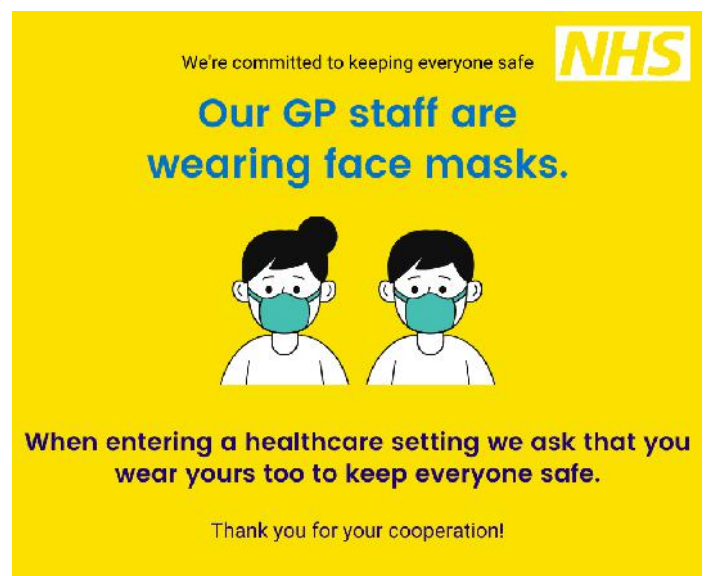
When to wear a face covering

The legal requirement to wear a face covering no longer applies. However, the government suggests that you continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where you may come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

Customers, visitors or staff may choose to wear face coverings in any setting.

Face coverings and face masks will continue to be required in health and care settings to comply with [infection prevention and control \(IPC\)](#) and [adult social care](#) guidance. This includes hospitals and primary or community care settings, such as GP surgeries. They must also be worn by everyone accessing or visiting care homes.

You are required to wear a face covering on entering these healthcare settings and must



keep it on until you leave unless you are exempt or have a reasonable excuse for removing it. Examples of what would usually be a reasonable excuse are listed in the 'If you are not able to wear a face covering' section below.

The Department for Transport has updated its guidance on [safer travel for passengers](#).

The Department for Education has updated its [guidance on the use of face coverings for schools, early years settings, out of school settings, and further and higher education settings](#).

If you are not able to wear a face covering

Face coverings are no longer required by law in England, but remain a requirement under infection prevention control (IPC) guidance in healthcare settings. There are some circumstances where people may not be able to wear a face covering.

Please be mindful and respectful of such circumstances. Some people are less able to wear face coverings, and the reasons for this may not be visible to others.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Children under the age of 11 (the UK Health Security Agency does not recommend face coverings for children under the age of 3 for health and safety reasons).
- People who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability.
- People for whom putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress.
- People speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate.
- To avoid the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others.
- Police officers and other emergency workers, given that this may interfere with their ability to serve the public.

Exemption cards

If you have an age, health or disability reason for not wearing a face covering:

- you do not routinely need to show any written evidence of this
- you do not need to show an exemption card

This means that you do not need to seek advice or request a letter from a medical professional about your reason for not wearing a face covering.

However, some people may feel more comfortable showing something that says they do not have to wear a face covering. This could be in the form of an exemption card,



badge or even a home-made sign.

Carrying an exemption card or badge is a personal choice and is not required by law.

If you wish to use an exemption card or badge, you can [download exemption card templates](#).

You can then print these yourself or show them on a mobile device. Please note that the government is not able to provide physical exemption cards or badges.

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of these templates in a more accessible format, please email publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk. Please say what format you need the template in and what assistive technology you use.

Face coverings at work

Staff and employers

Staff are not legally required to wear face coverings in the workplace but may choose to wear one.

Employers can also choose to ask their staff or customers to wear a face covering, even though they are not legally required. Consider

encouraging the use of face coverings by staff in crowded and enclosed spaces where they may come into contact with other people they do not normally meet.

When deciding whether you will ask workers or customers to wear a face covering, you need to consider the reasonable adjustments needed for staff and customers with disabilities. You also need to consider carefully how this fits with other obligations to workers and customers arising from the law on employment rights, health and safety and equality legislation.

Some people are not able to wear face coverings, and the reasons for this may not be visible to others. Please be mindful and respectful of such circumstances. You will also need to consider carefully your obligations arising from equality legislation.

For advice on how to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in your workplaces, please [check the government's working safely guidance](#).

Reducing risk

The government has provided [detailed guidance on reducing the risk of COVID-19 in workplaces](#). Employers should consider this guidance when completing their health and safety risk assessment, to help them decide which mitigations to put in place.

Further information

The reason for using face coverings

COVID-19 spreads from person to person through:

- small droplets
- clouds of tiny airborne particles known as aerosols
- contact with contaminated surfaces

When someone with COVID-19 breathes,



speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles (droplets and aerosols) which may contain the virus that causes COVID-19. When in close contact, the larger particles can land in the nose or mouth of people nearby or be breathed in by another person. The smaller airborne particles can stay suspended in the air for some time and be breathed in. Viruses can also be picked up from the surfaces the particles land on if you touch that surface and then your face without washing your hands first. This is why regular hand hygiene is still important for controlling the spread of the virus as well as other winter bugs.

The best available scientific evidence is that, when used correctly, wearing a face covering will reduce the spread of coronavirus particles, helping to protect everyone.

It is important to follow all the other government advice to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. If you have recent onset of any of the most important symptoms of COVID-19:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia)

You are no longer legally required to self isolate if you test positive for COVID-19, but it is recommended that if you can you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

How to wear a face covering

Face coverings with multiple layers and which fit snugly around the face work best. It is important that any face covering is worn correctly and handled with care. When people choose to wear a face covering, we recommend that they wear the highest quality one available to them, which should fit tightly around the nose and mouth and contain

multiple layers, as these provide greater protection.

A face covering should:

- Cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably (a nose wire may help with fit).
- Fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face.
- Be secured to the head with ties or ear loops.
- Be made of a material that you find to be comfortable and breathable, such as cotton.
- Ideally include at least 2 layers of fabric.
- Unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged. Single-use disposable masks should not be washed and reused.

When wearing a face covering you should:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on.
- Avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus.
- Change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.
- Avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession to minimise potential contamination.

When removing a face covering:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand

sanitiser before removing.

- Only handle the straps, ties or clips.
- Do not give it to someone else to use.
- If single-use, dispose of it responsibly.
- If reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed.

Make sure you clean any surfaces the face covering has touched using normal household cleaning products. If eating in a café, for example, it is important that you do not place the face covering on the table.

Face visors, shields and transparent face coverings

A face visor or shield may be worn in addition to a face covering but we do not recommend that they are worn instead of one. This is because face visors or shields do not cover the nose and mouth, and do not filter airborne particles.

Transparent face coverings may be worn by those who communicate through lip-reading or facial expressions. In order to be most effective, a face covering should fit securely around the face to cover the nose and mouth and be made of a breathable material capable of filtering airborne particles.

Buying and selling face coverings

In the UK, face coverings are being sold by a large number of retailers online and in store. The evidence indicates that any face covering with a reasonable level of filtration and that is worn properly (worn when recommended, and covers the nose and mouth) can help to reduce the spread.

There are currently no mandatory UK product standards for face coverings.

Face coverings that are sold must meet the existing requirements of the [General Product Safety Regulations 2005](#). Further details can be found in the [Office for Product and Safety Standards guidance for manufacturers and makers of face coverings](#).

Reusing and safely disposing of face coverings

You should wash and reuse cloth face coverings to prevent and reduce waste.

Wash your reusable face covering regularly and follow the washing instructions for the fabric. You can use your normal detergent. You can wash and dry it with other laundry. You must throw away your face covering if it is damaged.

If you need to throw away used face coverings as they are damaged or single-use:

- dispose of them responsibly
- do not put them in a recycling bin as they cannot be recycled through conventional recycling facilities
- take them home with you if there is no litter bin – do not drop them as litter

You do not need to:

- put them in an extra bag
- store them for a time before throwing them away

The government has published [guidance on the safe disposal of waste](#) for the public and businesses.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL ADVICE

If you're travelling from and to England during coronavirus (COVID-19), there are things you need to do before you travel and after you arrive.

Use this tool to find out:

- Where to find entry requirements for a country you're going to or travelling through.
- What you need to do before and after you return to England.
- Whether you need to take any tests and when.
- What you need to do to travel with children.
- Whether you're exempt from any rules.
- Whether a country you're going to or travelling through is on the red list.

You will be asked a series of questions so we can show you information relevant to your journey and circumstances.

There are different rules if you're:

travelling to Scotland

travelling to Wales

travelling to Northern Ireland

travelling to the Isle of Man

travelling to Jersey

travelling to Guernsey

Before you start

You'll be asked about your vaccination status. Check if you qualify as fully vaccinated for travel to England, including approved vaccines.

START NOW >

Travelling to England from within the UK, Ireland, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man

If you're travelling to England from within the Common Travel Area (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) and haven't been anywhere else within the 10 days before you arrive, there are no entry requirements for coming into England.

If you've been to a country or territory outside the Common Travel Area within the 10 days before you arrive in England, you must follow the rules for entering England from that country. You can use this tool to find out those rules.

Travelling to England from outside the Common Travel Area

If you live outside the Common Travel Area (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) and are travelling to England, check what you need to do to travel to England during coronavirus.



Travel to England from another country during coronavirus (COVID-19)

This page tells you what you must do before you travel to England and after you arrive.

What you must do depends on whether you qualify as fully vaccinated under the rules for travel to England.

[Read separate guidance to check if you qualify as fully vaccinated.](#)

If you are fully vaccinated

Before you travel to England you must [complete a passenger locator form](#). You need to do this in the 48 hours before you arrive in England.

You do not need to take any COVID-19 travel tests before you travel to England or after you arrive.

You do not need to quarantine when you arrive in England.

[Read separate guidance to check if you qualify as fully vaccinated.](#)

Red list countries and territories

There are different rules if you have been in a

red list country or territory in the 10 days before you arrive in England. There are currently no countries or territories on the [red list](#).

If you are not fully vaccinated

This is what you need to do if you do not qualify under the fully vaccinated rules for travel to England.

[Read separate guidance to check if you qualify as fully vaccinated.](#)

Before you travel to England – not fully vaccinated

Before you travel to England you must:

- Take a COVID-19 test – to be taken in the 2 days before you travel to England
- [Book and pay for a COVID-19 PCR test](#) – to be taken after you arrive in England
- [Complete a UK passenger locator form](#) – to be completed in the 48 hours before you arrive in England

You will need to enter your PCR test booking reference number in the passenger locator form.

[Read separate guidance about taking a COVID-19 test before you travel to England.](#)

When you arrive in England – not fully vaccinated

You do not need to quarantine when you arrive in England.

You must take the COVID-19 PCR test that you booked before you travelled.

You can take the test any time after you arrive and before the end of day 2 at the latest. The day you arrive in England is day 0.

If the test result is positive or unclear, you must self-isolate.

[Read separate guidance about how long you](#)



The poster features the NHS logo and the HM Government crest. The text is in white and yellow on a dark blue background. It includes a circular inset image of a family (a man, a woman, and a child) walking through an airport terminal, all wearing face masks. The man is pulling a suitcase.

HM Government

NHS

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

is being made easier.

From 11 February, there will be a simplified Passenger Locator Form, and removal of testing for eligible fully vaccinated arrivals to the UK.

Find out more at gov.uk/travel-abroad

have to self-isolate for and where you can self-isolate.

Red list countries and territories

There are different rules if you have been in a red list country in the 10 days before you arrive in England. There are currently no countries or territories on the red list.

Travelling with children

Children aged 17 and under do not have to:

- take any COVID-19 travel tests
- quarantine on arrival in England

You should check the rules in the country you are travelling from as they may require children to take a test at the start of your journey to England.

There are different rules for children who have been in a red list country or territory in the 10 days before they arrive in England. There are currently no countries or territories on the red list.

Medical and work-related exemptions

Some people cannot be fully vaccinated for medical reasons.

Read separate guidance about medical exemptions from vaccination.

There are also medical exemptions from testing before travel to England.

Some people are exempt from some or all of the requirements because of the job they do.

Transiting through England

Read separate guidance if you are transiting through England as part of an international journey.

Ireland, the UK, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man

If you're travelling to England from within the

UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man, you do not need to:

- complete a passenger locator form
- take any COVID-19 tests
- quarantine on arrival in England

This only applies if you have not been outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man in the 10 days before the day you arrive in England. If you have, you must follow the international travel rules in the place where you arrive.

See separate guidance on travel within the Common Travel Area after international travel.

Red list countries and territories

There are different rules if you have been in a red list country or territory in the 10 days before you arrive in England.

If you need to follow red list rules, you must do so if you are fully vaccinated or not.

There are currently no countries or territories on the red list.

Check if you qualify as fully vaccinated

What you need to do when you travel to England from abroad depends on whether you qualify as fully vaccinated or not.

To qualify under the fully vaccinated rules for travel to England, you must have proof of vaccination with a full course of an approved vaccine.

You must have had your final dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before you arrive in England. The day you had your final dose does not count as one of the 14 days.

Children and other groups that can follow fully vaccinated rules

The fully vaccinated rules also apply if you are either:

- under 18
- taking part in an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial in the UK or the USA, or a phase 2 or 3 vaccine trial that is regulated by the EMA or SRA
- unable to have a COVID-19 vaccination for a medical reason which has been approved by a registered medical professional under the medical exemptions process, and you are resident in England

[Read about applying for a medical exemption from vaccination using the NHS COVID Pass if you live in England.](#)

Previous infection

Proof of recovery from previous infection with COVID-19 - also known as natural immunity - will not be accepted as an alternative to proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test.

[Read separate guidance on travelling to England from abroad.](#)

Approved vaccines

You must have had a complete course of one of the following vaccines at least 14 days before you arrive in England:

- Covaxin
- Moderna
- Janssen (single dose vaccine)
- Novavax (Nuvaxovid and Covovax)
- Oxford/AstraZeneca
- Pfizer BioNTech
- Sinopharm Beijing
- Sinovac-CoronaVac

The day you have your final dose does not count as one of the 14 days.

Formulations of these vaccines, such as AstraZeneca Covishield, AstraZeneca Vaxzevria and Moderna Takeda, also qualify as approved vaccines.

2 dose vaccines

If you were vaccinated with a 2 dose vaccine, or a combination of them, you must have had both doses to be considered fully vaccinated for travel to the UK.

This applies in all cases, even if you've recently recovered from COVID-19 and have natural immunity.

Those who have had COVID-19 and have only had one dose of a 2 dose vaccine must follow [the rules for unvaccinated arrivals.](#)

Where 2 doses of a vaccine are required for a full course, you can:

- mix 2 different types of vaccine from the above list, for example Oxford/AstraZeneca and Sinopharm Beijing
- have the 2 vaccinations under 2 different approved programmes, for example Australia and Japan, UK and USA, France and Canada

Single dose vaccines

If you had an approved one dose vaccine (the Janssen vaccine), you are fully vaccinated.

Proof of vaccination

You must be able to prove that you've been fully vaccinated under a vaccination programme with approved proof of certification.

The proof must have been issued by either:

- The UK or UK overseas vaccination programme
- the United Nations vaccine programme for

staff and volunteers

one of the [countries or territories listed below](#)

If you are fully vaccinated under the UK vaccination programme, you can prove your vaccination status using either:

[NHS COVID Pass for England and Wales](#)

[NHS Scotland COVID Status app](#)

[COVIDCert NI in Northern Ireland](#)

You can also use the NHS COVID Pass letter, which you can request via the NHS 119 service or online via NHS.UK. You cannot use the paper card you receive following your vaccination as proof of vaccination.

If you were vaccinated in another country or territory, the table below gives examples of what you can use as proof of vaccination.

Vaccine certificates only

The vaccine certificate should be issued by a national or state-level public health authority and must be in English, French or Spanish, and include as a minimum:

- your forename and surname(s)

- your date of birth
- vaccine brand and manufacturer
- date of vaccination for every dose
- country or territory of vaccination and/or certificate issuer

Verify your vaccination status in the passenger locator form

You can verify your vaccination status in the [UK passenger locator form](#) if you are using either:

- The NHS COVID Pass
- The EU Digital COVID Certificate (EU DCC) or a certificate that is equivalent to the EU DCC

You should have your vaccine certificate available in case you are asked to show it.

Countries and territories with an approved proof of vaccination

List of countries and territories with approved proof of vaccination for travel to England and examples of proof of vaccination.

If you have proof of vaccination from a country or territory that is not on this list, or with [a vaccine that is not listed](#), you must follow the [rules for people who do not qualify as fully vaccinated](#).



NHS COVID PASS

An NHS COVID Pass shows your coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination details or test results. This is your COVID-19 status.

You may be asked to show your NHS COVID Pass:

- to travel abroad
- at events and venues asking for proof of your COVID-19 status in England, Wales or the Isle of Man

How to get your NHS COVID Pass

You can get an NHS COVID Pass digitally through the NHS App or the online NHS COVID Pass service.

Who can get a digital NHS COVID Pass

If you're aged 12 or over, you can get a digital NHS COVID Pass for travel.

If you're 18 or over, you can also use your digital NHS COVID Pass for domestic events and venues. People under 18 do not have to show proof of their COVID-19 status for domestic events or venues in England.

If you had your vaccination in the UK or the Isle of Man, it will automatically show on your NHS vaccination record within 5 days.

If you were vaccinated abroad

When you can get an NHS COVID Pass

When you can get an NHS COVID Pass depends if it's for travel, or for going to domestic events and venues.

When you can get a digital NHS COVID pass for travel abroad

To get a digital NHS COVID Pass for travel you need one of the following.

- To be fully vaccinated with a COVID-19

vaccine used in the UK. The NHS COVID Pass is usually available within 24 hours of having your vaccination, but it can take up to 5 days for your records to be updated.

- A positive NHS PCR test within the past 6 months (not available in the Isle of Man)

The NHS COVID Pass is available after you've finished self-isolating and up to 180 days after taking the test. This applies to NHS tests sent by post, or done at walk-in sites, drive-through sites or hospitals.

It does not apply to tests done for scientific research or tests by private companies, for example for travel. You cannot get an NHS COVID Pass on the basis of an antibody test.

When you can get a digital NHS COVID Pass for domestic events and venues

To get a digital NHS COVID Pass for domestic events and venues, you need one of the following.

- To be fully vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine used in the UK. The NHS COVID Pass is usually available 2 weeks after you're fully vaccinated.
- A negative NHS PCR test or negative lateral flow test within the past 48 hours (not available in the Isle of Man). The NHS COVID Pass is available as soon as you get your result. If you did a rapid lateral flow test at home, you need to report the result first. Find out how to [report a rapid lateral flow test result](#)
- To be part of an official COVID-19 vaccine trial in England or Wales. The NHS COVID Pass is now available to you.

The NHS App is not the same as the NHS COVID-19 App.

Contact your clinical trial site if you cannot get your domestic NHS COVID Pass.

- A confirmed medical exemption from COVID-19 vaccination, or vaccination and testing. The NHS COVID Pass is available once a doctor, clinician or midwife has approved your exemption application. [COVID-19 medical exemptions: proving you are unable to get vaccinated \(GOV.UK\).](#)

How to get a digital NHS COVID Pass

There are 2 ways you can get a digital NHS COVID Pass.

You can:

- [download and use the NHS App to get your NHS COVID Pass](#) if you're aged 13 or over
- [use the online NHS COVID Pass service](#) if you're aged 12 or over

Once you have your NHS COVID Pass you can download it as a PDF or it can be sent as a link in an email.

You need to be registered with a GP surgery in England or the Isle of Man to use the NHS App.

You'll be asked to create an NHS login if you do not have one already.

What is NHS login

You cannot get an NHS COVID Pass through the NHS App if you live in Wales.

How long a digital NHS COVID Pass is valid for

A digital NHS COVID Pass is valid for 30 days. The 30-day period refreshes and starts again each time you log in.

If you have an NHS COVID Pass for travel based on a positive PCR test, the 30-day period will refresh for up to 180 days after you took the test.

If you use the NHS App for your NHS COVID Pass, it may ask you to confirm your phone number when you log in. If you do not confirm it, your NHS COVID Pass will be valid for only 72 hours.

NHS COVID PASS EXAMPLES



NHS APP



APPLE WALLET



GOOGLE WALLET



PDF DOWNLOAD

If you download your digital NHS COVID Pass as a PDF it will be valid for 30 days. Always check the expiry date before using it.

Members of the UK armed forces

Members of the UK armed forces need to visit the 'My health care hub' on the [Defence Gateway \(login required\)](#) to find out how to get their NHS COVID Pass.

Vaccination status in other parts of the UK and the Crown Dependencies

- [Northern Ireland – nidirect: COVID certificate for NI residents](#)
- [Scotland – NHS Inform: Get a record of your COVID-19 vaccination status](#)
- [Wales – Welsh Government: NHS COVID Pass: prove your vaccination status](#)
- [Guernsey – GOV.GG: Covid status certificates \(vaccine passports\)](#)
- [Isle of Man – Isle of Man Government: NHS COVID Pass for Isle of Man residents](#)
- [Jersey – gov.je: COVID status certification](#)

COVID-19 vaccine trials

If you were vaccinated as part of an official clinical trial in England or Wales, you can get an NHS COVID Pass for domestic events and venues.

You'll be able to get an NHS COVID Pass for travel soon. Some people already can, it depends if your clinical trial site has put your vaccination information on your NHS vaccination record.

If you cannot get an NHS COVID Pass, contact your clinical trial site.

Check the entry requirements for the country

you're visiting.

Medical exemptions from COVID-19 vaccination and testing

You can apply for a medical exemption if you cannot get vaccinated, or vaccinated and tested, for medical reasons.

You'll be able to get an NHS COVID Pass for domestic events and venues when your medical exemption is confirmed.

Find out who can apply and [how to apply for a medical exemption on GOV.UK](#).

Vaccinations abroad

If you live in England and had your vaccination abroad in certain countries, you can ask to have this added to your NHS vaccination record. Once it is added you can get an NHS COVID Pass.

[Tell the NHS about coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccinations you've had abroad.](#)



PREGNANCY AND CORONAVIRUS

If you're pregnant, you may be unsure how coronavirus (COVID-19) could affect you, your baby and your pregnancy care.

It's important to tell your midwife or maternity team if you have symptoms of COVID-19. You can ask them for help with any other concerns as you usually would.

Pregnancy and your risk

You're at higher risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 if you're pregnant. If you get COVID-19 late in your pregnancy, your baby could also be at risk.

It's strongly recommended that you get vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect you and your baby.

It's also important to follow advice to stop the spread of COVID-19 throughout your pregnancy. Especially when you're more than 28 weeks pregnant (in your 3rd trimester).

If you're from an ethnic minority group, evidence suggests you're more likely to be admitted to hospital if you get COVID-19. Maternity teams are taking extra steps to keep

you safe if you're higher risk.

It may be possible for you to pass COVID-19 to your baby before they're born. But when this has happened, the babies have got better.

There's no evidence COVID-19 causes miscarriage or affects how your baby develops in pregnancy.

What to do if you're pregnant

As soon as you find out you're pregnant speak to a GP or midwife.

They'll support you and give you all the information you need. They'll also make sure you receive safe and personal maternity care.

If you're pregnant, it's important to follow advice about how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19, such as washing your hands regularly.

If you're more than 28 weeks pregnant it's especially important to follow this advice.

You still need to go to all of your pregnancy (antenatal) scans and appointments unless you're told not to.

COVID-19 vaccine in pregnancy

It's strongly recommended that you get vaccinated against COVID-19 if you're pregnant.

It's preferable for you to have the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccine. This is because they've been more widely used during pregnancy in other countries and no safety concerns have been identified.

[Find out more about pregnancy and COVID-19 vaccination](#)

Appointments and scans

You'll still have regular appointments and scans while you're pregnant. But there may be



The poster is red with white and yellow text. It features the HM Government logo and the NHS logo in the top left corner. The main text reads: 'YOU CAN GET YOUR COVID-19 VACCINES AT ANY STAGE OF YOUR PREGNANCY.' Below this, in yellow text, it says: 'So if you haven't already, the right time is now.' At the bottom, it says 'GET BOOSTED NOW' followed by the URL 'nhs.uk/covidvaccination'.

some changes.

You may find that:

- some midwife appointments are online, by phone or by [video call](#)
- you may be asked to wear a mask or gown when you're in a hospital or clinic
- you may be asked to show proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test
- some appointments may be cancelled or rescheduled – your appointment will be rescheduled or you'll be able to rebook

This is to help keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19.

If you're unsure if you can bring your partner to your appointment, ask your midwife or maternity team.

Call your midwife or maternity team if:

- you've missed an appointment and need to book another one
- you have any questions about your care or appointments
- you do not know when your next appointment is
- you have symptoms of COVID-19

If you get symptoms of COVID-19

If you get any symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste):

Book a test – get a PCR test (test that is sent to a lab) to check if you have COVID-19 as soon as possible. Anyone you live with should also get a test if they have symptoms.

Stay at home and do not have visitors – self-isolate until you get your test result. Only leave your home to have a test. [Check if people you live with need to self-isolate.](#)

Speak to your midwife or maternity team – they will advise you what to do. You may need to rebook some of your pregnancy appointments or have them online, by phone or as a [video consultation](#).

If you have COVID-19 and use a pulse oximeter

If you have COVID-19, your GP, midwife or maternity team may ask you to monitor your oxygen levels at home using a pulse oximeter.

If your blood oxygen level:

- is going down, contact your GP, midwife or maternity team
- is 94 or below, contact your hospital immediately or call 999

To read more about pulse oximeters, visit [how to look after yourself at home if you have COVID-19](#).

If you have any other symptoms

If you have any other symptoms, or anything else you're worried about, you should still get medical help as you usually would.

You can still have GP appointments or speak to your midwife or maternity team if you have any questions.

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 get shortness of breath when resting

or lying down

- you cannot cope with your COVID-19 symptoms at home
- your temperature is raised
- you have severe tiredness
- you feel unsafe at any time

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

If you do not have a midwife or maternity team call a GP or go to 111.nhs.uk. Call 111 if you cannot get help online.

Call 999 if:

- you feel very unwell or think there's something seriously wrong
- you have severe chest pain
- you cough up blood
- you feel cold and sweaty, with pale or blotchy skin
- you collapse or faint
- you have a rash that looks like small bruises or bleeding under the skin and does not fade when you roll a glass over it
- you feel agitated, confused or very drowsy
- you've stopped peeing or are peeing much less than usual
- you're so breathless that you're unable to say short sentences when resting
- your breathing has got suddenly worse

Labour and birth

It's really important you have a midwife with you when you give birth to keep you and your baby safe.

If you and your baby are well, you may be able

to give birth at home, in a midwifery-led unit or in a birth centre.

If you've had any complications during your pregnancy you may be advised to give birth in a unit led by a doctor (obstetrician).

There may also be some changes to what usually happens where you plan to give birth, because of COVID-19.

Speak to your midwife or maternity team for more information.

You can also read more about [signs that labour has begun](#).

Birth partners

Having a birth partner is important for your safety and wellbeing during labour and birth.

You'll be able to have a birth partner during labour and the birth if they do not have symptoms of COVID-19. But there may be limits on how long they can stay after the birth.

If your birth partner has symptoms or has been asked to self-isolate, they may not be able to come with you. You might want to have a backup birth partner just in case.



The poster features a pregnant woman wearing a face mask, with her hands resting on her belly. The background is red with yellow and white text. The NHS logo is in the top right corner. The text reads: 'Pregnant women who get a symptomatic COVID-19 infection are two to three times more likely to give birth to their baby prematurely. GET BOOSTED NOW nhs.uk/covidvaccination'. The HM Government logo is in the top left corner.

If you have COVID-19 and go into labour

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and go into labour, you'll be advised to give birth in a unit led by a doctor (obstetrician). This is so the team can look after you and your baby more closely.

You'll be cared for in an area within the maternity unit that's just for pregnant women and people with COVID-19.

You may see the midwives and maternity team wearing aprons, masks or eye protection. These things are to keep you, your baby and the staff caring for you safe, and to stop the spread of infection.

Your maternity team has been advised on how to keep you and your baby safe. They will make sure you get the best care and respect your birth choices as closely as possible.

After the birth

After your baby is born, you should be able to have skin-to-skin contact unless your baby is unwell and needs care in the neonatal unit.

You'll also be encouraged to breastfeed. There's no evidence COVID-19 can pass on to your baby in breast milk, so the benefits of breastfeeding and the protection it offers outweigh any risks.

As well as enjoying this time with your newborn baby, it's important to be aware of any signs they might be unwell. At the moment

it can be hard to know what to do. But trust your instincts and get medical help if you think your baby needs it.

For example, it's common for babies to get newborn jaundice. Jaundice is usually harmless, but it's important to be able to recognise the symptoms and to get medical help if your baby has them.

If you have any questions or need help

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, speak to your midwife or maternity team.

You can call the NHS Volunteer Responders on 0808 196 3646. They can help with things like:

- doing shopping
- picking up prescriptions
- going to appointments or hospital

You can also find answers to commonly asked questions about COVID-19 and pregnancy from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecology.

Essex Wellbeing Service

They have a dedicated group of volunteers to offer help and support.

Call 0300 303 9988. Mon– Fri 8am—7pm.
Sat 10am—2pm. Email
provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net

[Register for help here.](#)



HM Government

NHS

SINCE MAY 2021,

98%

OF PREGNANT WOMEN ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL WITH COVID-19 WERE UNVACCINATED.

GET BOOSTED NOW nhs.uk/covidvaccination

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AT HOME IF YOU HAVE CORONAVIRUS

Most people with coronavirus (COVID-19) feel better within a few weeks. You may be able to look after yourself at home while you recover.

While you're ill, ask a friend, family member or neighbour to check up on you. Arrange a regular call or talk through a doorway (not face to face) so they can check how you're doing.

Treating a high temperature

If you have a high temperature, it can help to:

- get lots of rest
- drink plenty of fluids (water is best) to avoid dehydration – drink enough so your pee is light yellow and clear
- Take [paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#) if you feel uncomfortable

[Is it safe to take ibuprofen if I have symptoms of COVID-19?](#)

Treating a cough

If you have a cough, it's best to avoid lying on your back. Lie on your side or sit upright instead.

To help ease a cough, try having a teaspoon of honey. But do not give honey to babies under 12 months.

If this does not help, you could contact a pharmacist for advice about cough treatments.

Things to try if you're feeling breathless

If you're feeling breathless, it can help to keep your room cool.

Try turning the heating down or opening a

window. Do not use a fan as it may spread the virus.

You could also try:

- breathing slowly in through your nose and out through your mouth, with your lips together like you're gently blowing out a candle
- sitting upright in a chair
- relaxing your shoulders, so you're not hunched
- leaning forward slightly – support yourself by putting your hands on your knees or on something stable like a chair

Try not to panic if you're feeling breathless. This can make it worse.

Babies and children

Call 111 if you're worried about a baby or child.

If they seem very unwell, are getting worse, or you think there's something seriously wrong, call 999.

Do not delay getting help if you're worried. Trust your instincts.

Get more advice about [COVID-19 symptoms in children](#).

Pregnancy advice

If you're pregnant or have recently given birth, contact your midwife, GP or maternity team if you have any concerns or questions.

[Get more advice about pregnancy and COVID-19](#)

The NHS is offering new antibody and antiviral treatments to people who have COVID-19 and are at highest risk of becoming seriously ill.

[Find out more about treatments for COVID-19](#)

Get advice from NHS 111 or a GP if:

- you're feeling gradually more unwell or more breathless
- you have difficulty breathing when you stand up or move around
- you feel very weak, achy or tired
- you're shaking or shivering
- you've lost your appetite
- you're unable to care for yourself – for example, tasks like washing and dressing or making food are too difficult
- you still feel unwell after 4 weeks – this may be long COVID

Go to 111.nhs.uk, call 111 or call your GP surgery.

Go to A&E immediately or call 999 if:

- you're so breathless that you're unable to say short sentences when resting
- your breathing has got suddenly worse
- you cough up blood
- you feel cold and sweaty, with pale or blotchy skin
- you have a rash that looks like small bruises or bleeding under the skin and does not fade when you roll a glass over it
- you collapse or faint
- you feel agitated, confused or very drowsy
- you've stopped peeing or are peeing much less than usual

If you have a pulse oximeter

A pulse oximeter is a device that clips on your finger to check the level of oxygen in your blood.

Low levels of oxygen in your blood can be a sign you're getting worse. A pulse oximeter can help you spot this before you feel breathless or have any other symptoms, so you can get help quickly.

You may be asked by a GP or healthcare professional to monitor your oxygen levels if you're at a high risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19.

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 a pulse oximeter to use, [watch an NHS YouTube video about how to use a pulse oximeter and when to get help.](#)

It's helpful to write down your readings, so you know what your oxygen level is when you first use the pulse oximeter and can spot if your level is going down. This can also help if you need to speak to a healthcare professional.

Speak to a GP or healthcare professional before using your pulse oximeter and tell them if you have any questions or concerns.

If you have brown or black skin

Pulse oximeters work by shining light through your skin to measure the level of oxygen in your blood.

There have been some reports they may be less accurate if you have brown or black skin. They may show readings higher than the level of oxygen in your blood.

You should still use your pulse oximeter if you've been given one. The important thing is to check your blood oxygen level regularly to

see if your readings are going down.

When to get medical help

Blood oxygen	What to do
95 to 100	Stay at home and continue to check your blood oxygen level regularly
93 or 94	Check your blood oxygen level again within an hour – if it's still 93 or 94, call 111 or your GP surgery for
92 or below	Check your blood oxygen level again straight away – if it's still 92 or below, go to A&E immediately or call

Get help while you're staying at home

NHS Volunteer Responders can help you while you have to stay at home (self-isolate).

They can help with things like collecting shopping and medicines.

Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm, everyday) to arrange help from a volunteer.

NHS COVIS APP

Advice in England has changed

You're no longer required by law to self-isolate.

The NHS Test and Trace contact tracing service has now closed. The NHS COVID-19 app is being updated.

If the app advises you to self-isolate, you should still take steps to help reduce the chance of passing coronavirus (COVID-19) on to others.

This advice will be updated on 1 April 2022.



HM Government **NHS**

If you have COVID-19 symptoms you should avoid contact with others and **order a PCR test.**

If you test positive, stay at home.



HM Government **NHS**

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

BOOK YOUR FIRST OR SECOND DOSE OF COVID-19 VACCINE NOW

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF COVID

For some people, coronavirus (COVID-19) can cause symptoms that last weeks or months after the infection has gone. This is sometimes called post-COVID-19 syndrome or "long COVID"

About long COVID

How long it takes to recover from coronavirus is different for everybody.

Many people feel better in a few days or weeks and most will make a full recovery within 12 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer.

The chances of having long-term symptoms does not seem to be linked to how ill you are when you first get coronavirus.

People who had mild symptoms at first can still have long-term problems.

Symptoms of long COVID

There are lots of symptoms you can have after a coronavirus infection.

Common long COVID symptoms include:

- Extreme tiredness (fatigue).
- Shortness of breath.
- Chest pain or tightness.
- Problems with memory and concentration ("brain fog").
- Difficulty sleeping (insomnia).
- Heart palpitations.
- Dizziness.
- Pins and needles.
- Joint pain
- Depression and anxiety
- Tinnitus, earaches

- Feeling sick, diarrhoea, stomach aches, loss of appetite.
- A high temperature, cough, headaches, sore throat, changes to sense of smell or taste.
- Rashes.

Contact your GP if you're worried about symptoms 4 weeks or more after having coronavirus

Your doctor will ask about your symptoms and the impact they're having on your life.

They may suggest some tests to find out more about your symptoms and rule out other things that could be causing them.

These might include:

- blood tests
- checking your blood pressure and heart rate
- a chest X-ray

Your doctor will talk to you about the care and support you might need.

You may be given advice about how to manage and monitor your symptoms at home.

If the symptoms are having a big impact on your life, you may be referred to a specialist rehabilitation service or a service that specialises in the specific symptoms you have.

These services can help manage your symptoms and help you recover.

You can find more information to support your recovery on the [Your COVID Recovery website](https://www.colchester.gov.uk/coronavirus-recovery).

VENTILATION OF INDOOR SPACES

Ventilation is the process of introducing fresh air into indoor spaces while removing stale air. Letting fresh air into indoor spaces can help remove air that contains virus particles and prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles (droplets and aerosols) containing the virus that causes COVID-19. While larger droplets fall quickly to the ground, aerosols containing the virus can remain suspended in the air. If someone breathes in virus particles that are suspended in the air, they can become infected with COVID-19. This is known as airborne transmission.

In poorly ventilated rooms the amount of virus in the air can build up, increasing the risk of spreading COVID-19, especially if there are lots of infected people in the room. The virus can also remain in the air after an infected person has left.

Bringing fresh air into a room and removing older stale air that contains virus particles reduces the chance of spreading COVID-19. The more fresh air that is brought inside, the quicker any airborne virus will be removed from the room.

Ventilation is most important if someone in your household has COVID-19 or if you are indoors with people you do not live with. You can pass COVID-19 on to others if you only have mild symptoms or even no symptoms at all.

Good ventilation has also been linked to health benefits such as better sleep and fewer sick days off from work or school.

Ventilation does not prevent COVID-19 from spreading through close contact and is only one of the actions you can take to stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Minimise the amount of time you spend indoors with people you do not live with

To reduce the risk of catching COVID-19, or passing it on, minimise the amount of time you spend indoors with people you do not live with. Meet outside if possible. If you do meet indoors, make sure the space is well ventilated. Avoid spending time with people you do not live with in spaces with a limited flow of fresh air, such as rooms without ventilation or windows that are never opened. The risk is greater in small rooms as the concentration of virus in the air can build up more quickly than in larger areas.

What you can do to improve ventilation

How you maintain or improve ventilation will depend on the building. Buildings are ventilated by natural systems such as vents, windows and chimneys, or by mechanical systems such as extractor fans or air conditioning, or a combination of both.

Ventilate your home

Opening windows and doors at home is the simplest way of improving ventilation for most people.

If windows have openings at both the top and the bottom (such as sash windows), using just the top opening will help incoming fresh air warm up as it mixes with room air, reducing cold draughts. In warmer weather, use both the top and bottom openings as this will help provide even more airflow.

Opening windows and doors at opposite sides of your room or home will also provide a good flow of fresh air (this is known as cross ventilation).

Make sure trickle vents (small vents usually on the top of a window) or grilles are open and

not blocked. Air which flows in from these vents will mix with warm room air as it enters, which helps keep the room a comfortable temperature.

If possible, maintain openings throughout the day to allow a constant flow of fresh air into the home. The weather can affect the amount of air that flows through openings and so these should be adjusted to balance warmth with the amount of ventilation, where possible.

If someone is working in or visiting your home

If you have people working in or visiting your home, let as much fresh air into your home as possible without getting uncomfortably cold while they are there, and for a short period before they arrive and after they have left.

Keep warm

Ventilating your home does not mean that it has to be cold. You should keep the temperature in the room you are in to at least 18°C as temperatures below this can affect

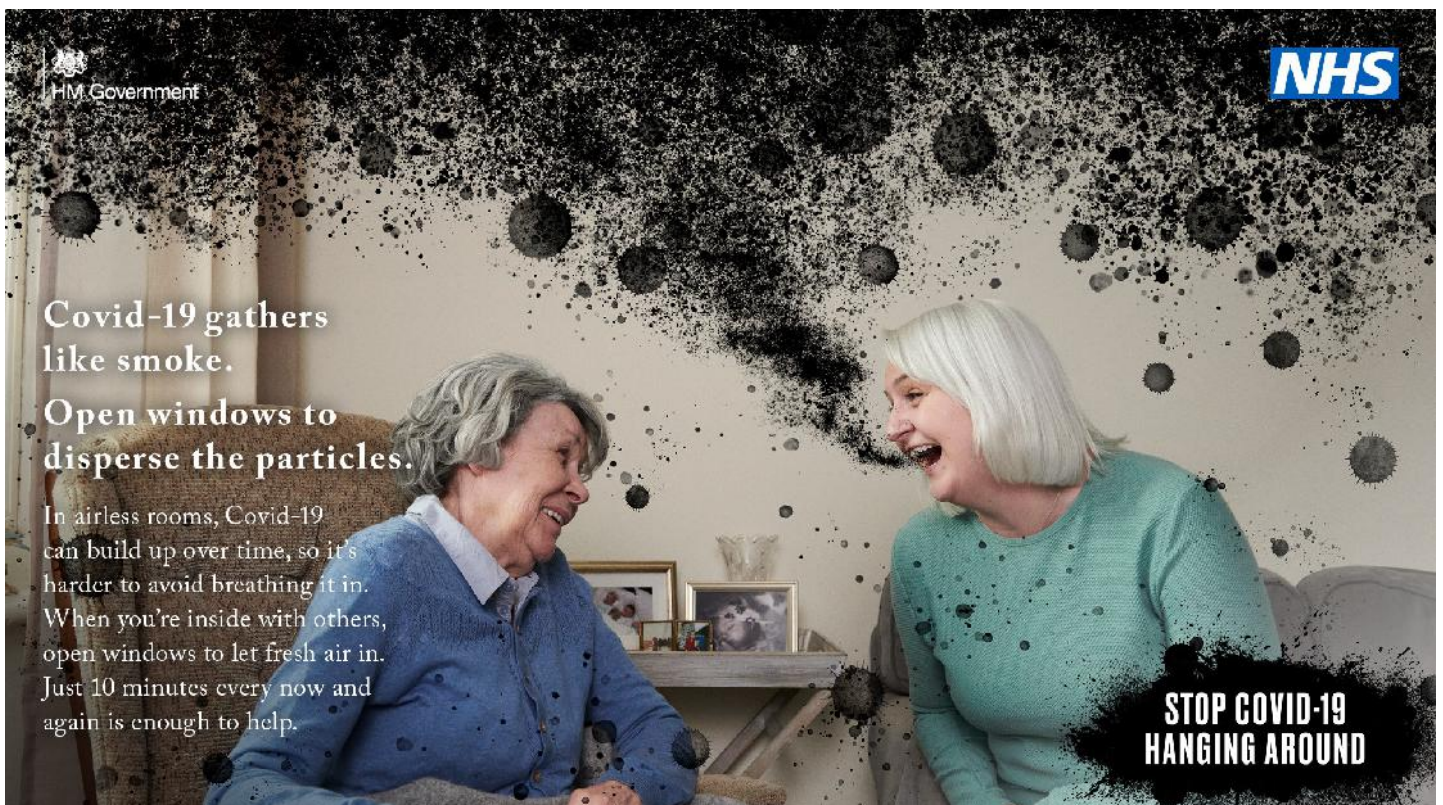
your health, especially if you are 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition.

In colder weather, where it is not comfortable to leave windows open fully, opening the windows slightly can also provide ventilation and reduce cold drafts.

There is advice available about how to keep warm and well. If you are having difficulty heating your home, you may be able to claim financial and practical help even if you don't own the property. Visit the Simple Energy Advice website for information about the help that is available or call their helpline on 0800 444 202. Ofgem has further advice on what to do if you are struggling to pay your energy bills.

Mechanical ventilation in the home

If your home has a mechanical ventilation system, make sure this is working and maintained in line with manufacturers' instructions. Set ventilation systems to bring fresh air in and not recirculate indoor air. Devices that only recirculate indoor air will not



remove airborne virus from the home. You can use the boost mode (if available) to increase ventilation if someone in your household is self-isolating due to COVID-19 or if you meet people you do not live with indoors.

Ventilation can also be increased by leaving extractor fans in bathrooms, toilets and kitchen areas running for longer than usual, with the door closed, after someone has been in the room.

Ventilation in the workplace and non-domestic settings

Ventilation should be considered alongside other control measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission within your workplace or public indoor space.

It is important to identify and deal with areas that are not well ventilated. The more people occupying an area that is poorly ventilated, and the longer they remain in it, the greater the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Control measures such as avoiding certain activities or gatherings, restricting or reducing the duration of activities, providing ventilation breaks during or between room usage should be considered alongside ventilation for reducing the risk of airborne transmission.

Any actions to improve ventilation should not compromise other aspects of safety and security (for example, avoid propping open fire doors), and should consider other consequences such as health and wellbeing impacts from thermal discomfort.

Employers should provide employees with clear guidance on ventilation, why it is important, and instruction on how to achieve and maintain good natural ventilation or to operate systems if there are user controls.

The Health and Safety Executive provides

advice on [working safely](#) and [ventilation and air conditioning](#).

Make sure mechanical ventilation systems are maintained in line with manufacturers' instructions. Set ventilation systems to using a fresh air supply and not recirculating indoor air, where possible. Assessing the requirement and performance of ventilation systems in many environments requires engineering expertise. In addition, ventilation design may be specific to the setting. For some existing and older buildings, ventilation systems may not have been designed to meet current standards and additional mitigations may be needed. If you are unsure, seek the advice of your heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) engineer or adviser.

Detailed [ventilation guidance](#) for workplaces and public buildings during the pandemic is provided by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE).

Ventilation in vehicles

Like buildings, enclosed vehicles including cars, vans, and buses can also be high-risk for spreading COVID-19. It is important that vehicles are well ventilated to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Follow guidance on [safer travel for passengers](#) if you need to travel. Where you need to travel, consider walking or cycling if you can.

When operating or travelling in vehicles:

- switch ventilation systems on while people are in the vehicle – set to drawing fresh air in, not recirculating air
- to improve ventilation, windows can also be opened (partially if it's cold) – heating can be left on to keep the vehicle warm
- for vehicles that carry different

passengers, such as taxis, clear the air between different passengers or at the journey end so the vehicle is aired before anyone else gets in

- opening doors where it is safe to do so will help to change the air quickly – opening windows fully can also help to clear the air in the vehicle

Further guidance on safer transport for operators and taxis and private hire vehicles is available. The Health and Safety Executive also has advice on ventilation in vehicles.

This guidance is of a general nature and should be treated as a guide. In the event of

conflict between any applicable legislation (including the health and safety legislation) and this guidance, the applicable legislation shall prevail.



USING THE NHS AND OTHER HEALTH SERVICES

At the moment it can be hard to know what to do if you're unwell or have a concern about your health.

It's important to:

- Get medical help if you think you need it.
- Keep any appointments or procedures you have booked – unless you're told not to go.
- Go to hospital if you're advised to.

NHS services have made changes to make sure it's safe for you to be seen during coronavirus. There are also ways to get medical help and prescriptions online or over the phone.

Health information and advice

The best place to get accurate health information is the [NHS website](#).

The NHS website has information and advice on:

- [medical conditions and symptoms](#)
- [common medicines](#)
- [healthy lifestyle](#)

You can also check your GP surgery's website. Lots of GP surgeries have online services where you can get advice and support from your GP surgery team. [Find your GP surgery](#) to get its website details.

Help and support from a GP

If you need to contact a GP, do not go into the surgery in person.

You can:

- Visit the GP surgery's website, or use an [online service](#) to contact your GP – [find](#)



[your GP surgery](#) to get its website details.

- Call your GP surgery.

Your GP surgery will then give you advice about what to do.

A phone or video call with a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional may be booked for you.

You'll only be asked to visit the surgery if absolutely necessary.

Your GP surgery may be very busy at the moment and you may have to wait longer than usual to speak to someone if it's not urgent.

Repeat prescriptions

If you have a repeat prescription that you usually request at your GP surgery or pharmacy, you can do this online.

You can order repeat prescriptions using:

- [Online services and apps linked to your GP surgery](#).
- Pharmacies that have an online repeat prescription service – you can search for these online.

Do not go to your GP surgery or pharmacy to order prescriptions. Call them if you cannot order your prescription online.

When you order your prescription, order it at the same time and in the same amount you usually would. Do not order more than you need as this may mean someone else will be

unable to get their medicine.

Read more about [how to order repeat prescriptions online](#).

Hospitals

If you have a hospital appointment, it's important to go.

Some changes have been made to hospital services:

- You must wear something that covers your nose and mouth when you go to a hospital.
- Some appointments may be online, by phone or by [video call](#).
- You may be asked to come to your appointment alone, if you can.
- Some appointments may be cancelled or rescheduled – but keep going to any appointments you usually have, unless you're told not to.

If you're having surgery or a procedure:

- You, the people you live with and anyone in your support bubble may need to self-isolate before you go into hospital.
- You may need a test to check if you have coronavirus before you go into hospital.

Your hospital will contact you with more information about what you need to do.

Dentists

Dentists are open for urgent and routine treatments. Contact your dentist by phone or email.

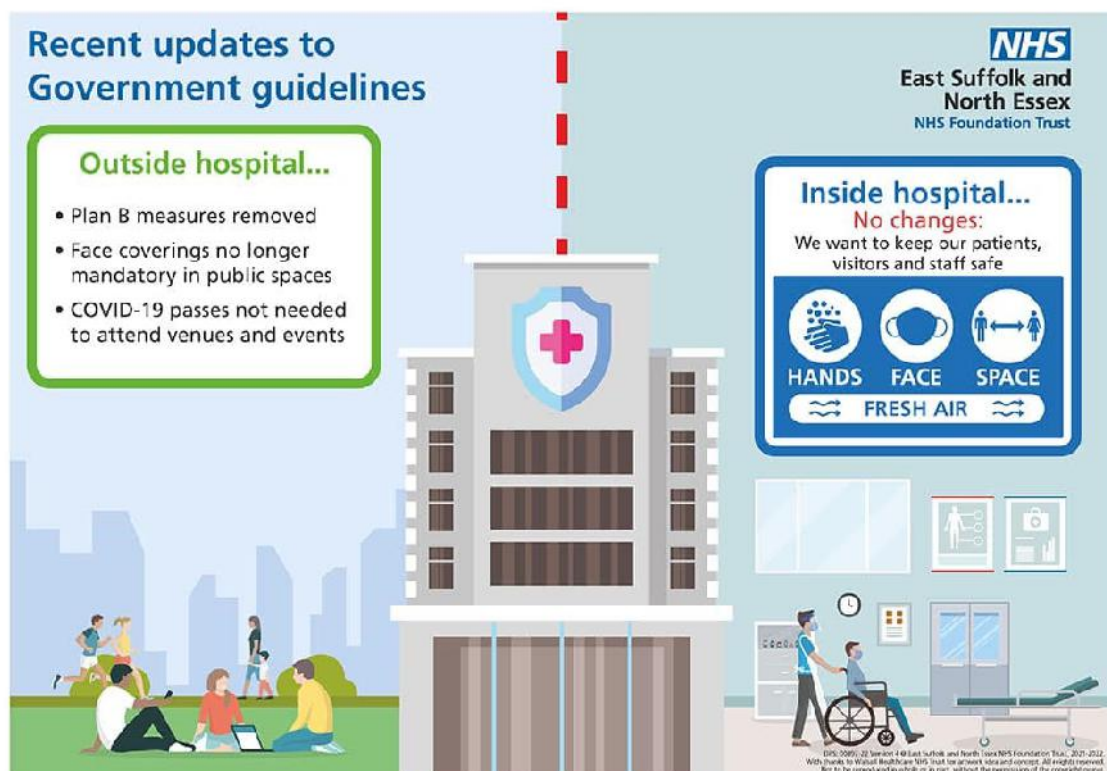
Changes have been made to keep you and the dental care team safe.

You might have to wait longer for an appointment if it's not urgent.

Mental health services

Mental health services are open, including services for children and young people.

You can get appointments face-to-face, by phone or online.



- If you have an existing mental health condition, speak to your GP or your mental health care team as usual.
- If you're struggling to cope with feelings of anxiety and depression, a GP can refer you for NHS talking therapies or you can refer yourself online without speaking to a GP. [Find an NHS psychological therapies service \(IAPT\)](#)
- If you need help for a mental health crisis or emergency, you can get 24-hour support and advice. [Find out where to get urgent help for mental health](#)

More information and support

[Children and young people's mental health services \(CYPMHS\)](#)

[How to access mental health services](#)

[Every Mind Matters: how to look after your mental health](#)

Sexual health clinics

Call a sexual health clinic if you need help or advice about sexual health issues like sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or contraception.

Clinics can be busy, so you may need to wait for your call to be answered and you may need to call more than once.

Only go to a clinic if you've been told to.

[Find sexual health clinic contact details](#)

Contraception

If you need contraception, call your GP surgery or a [sexual health clinic](#) as soon as possible. Only go in person if you've been told to.

You'll usually have a phone or video consultation. You'll get an electronic prescription you can use to collect your contraception from a pharmacy or get it delivered.

It can take longer to get contraception at the moment and some types are not widely available.

You'll be told about other types of contraception you can use if you're unable to get the type you want.

See [Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare: advice for women seeking contraception during the COVID-19 epidemic](#).

Urgent medical help

If you need urgent medical help, use the regular [NHS 111 online service](#).

The 111 online service asks questions about your symptoms to help you get the help you need.

Call 111 if you need urgent help for a child under 5 or cannot get help online.

Emergency medical help

For life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance.

Try to avoid going straight to A&E instead of calling an ambulance.

Online services and apps

If you're registered with a GP surgery, you can use online services and apps that may allow you to:

- order repeat prescriptions

CORONAVIRUS HELP

If you think you have [symptoms of coronavirus](#) and need medical advice, use the [NHS 111 online coronavirus service](#).

- see parts of your health record, including test results
- book, check or cancel appointments

You may not be able to book appointments at the moment. Please check your GP surgery's website for how to contact staff ([find your GP surgery](#) to get its website details).

If you can book an appointment, it is likely to be a phone or video appointment.

Find out [how to start using online services](#).



SERIOUS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE

- If you develop any of these symptoms, call your healthcare provider or health facility and seek medical care immediately.
- This is not an exhaustive list. These are the most common symptoms of serious illness, but you could get very sick with other symptoms – if you have any questions, call for help immediately.



MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS



LESS COMMON SYMPTOMS



PLEASE NOTE:

- If you live in an area where malaria, dengue or other infections are common and you have any of above symptoms, seek immediate medical care according to the local health authorities.
- Stay in touch with your primary care provider to ensure you continue to receive the routine care you need, such as medication refills, follow-ups and other routine consultations.

YOUR COVID RECOVERY SERVICE

As you find yourself recovering from COVID-19 you may still be coming to terms with the impact the virus has had on both your body and mind.

These changes should get better over time, some may take longer than others, but there are things you can do to help.

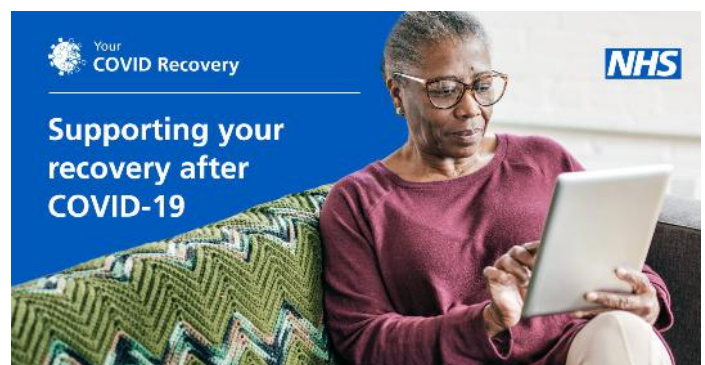
Your COVID Recovery helps you to understand what has happened and what you might expect as part of your recovery. For further information, visit: www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk

Information for family, friends and carers

Supporting your family member, relative or friend following their COVID illness can be challenging.

You may be providing emotional and physical help in addition to all your other responsibilities.

This can be a very stressful time for you both and we hope the information within the website will give you reassurance and support during their recovery.



GET TESTED FOR CORONAVIRUS

There are different tests you can get to check if you have coronavirus (COVID-19). The test you need depends on why you're getting tested.

The 2 main tests are:

- PCR tests – mainly for people with symptoms, they're sent to a lab to be checked
- rapid lateral flow tests – these are usually for people who do not have symptoms, they give a quick result using a device similar to a pregnancy test

Both tests are free.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19

Get a PCR test as soon as possible if you have any of these symptoms, even if mild:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. [Get advice about staying at home and avoiding contact with others](#)

[Get a PCR test to check if you have COVID-19 on GOV.UK](#)

If you're eligible for new COVID-19 treatments

If you're eligible for new COVID-19 treatments you should be sent a PCR test to use if you have symptoms. If you do not have a PCR test at home, you can use a rapid lateral flow test.

[Find out how to get a test to check if you're eligible for new COVID-19 treatments](#)

If you need a follow-up PCR test

If you get a positive lateral flow test result, you do not usually need to get a follow-up PCR test. You should only get a follow-up PCR test if:

- you're [eligible for new COVID-19 treatments](#)
- you're asked to do so as part of research

[Get a follow-up PCR test on GOV.UK](#)

If you live with or have been in contact with someone who's tested positive

You're no longer advised to do daily rapid lateral flow tests after you've come into contact with someone who has COVID-19.

If you live with or have stayed overnight in the household of someone who has the virus, you should follow the [advice for close contacts of people with COVID-19 on GOV.UK](#).

If you've had contact with someone with COVID-19 but do not live with them or have not stayed overnight in their household, follow the [guidance on how to stay safe and prevent](#)



Regular rapid testing

will help to identify people who have **no symptoms** and may be **unknowingly spreading the virus**



the spread of COVID-19 on GOV.UK.

Going into hospital

You may need to get tested if you're due to have surgery or a procedure.

The hospital will arrange this for you. Contact your hospital department if you have any questions.

Travelling abroad from England or returning

You may need to take a test before, during and after your trip.

Check the guidance on:

- travel abroad from England during COVID-19 on GOV.UK

- what you need to do when you return to England on GOV.UK

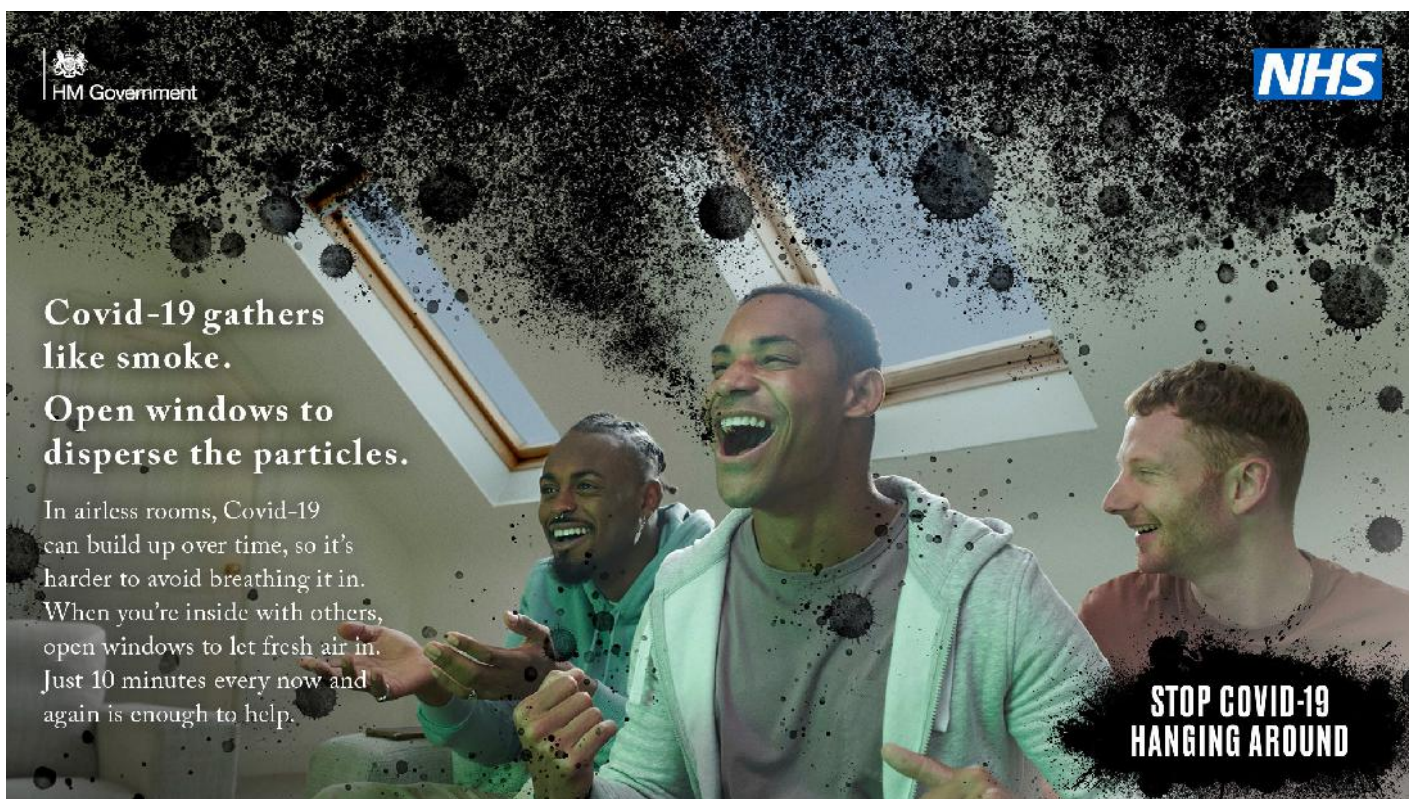
You'll need to pay for a test yourself. You cannot use a free test from the NHS.

Find out about private providers of COVID-19 testing on GOV.UK

Care home residents and staff

Care home managers can get tests for staff and residents even if they do not have symptoms.

Find out about testing guidance in care homes on GOV.UK



CORONAVIRUS VACCINES

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective. They give you the best protection against COVID-19.

Who can get a COVID-19 vaccine

People aged 18 and over (or turning 18 within 3 months) can get a 1st and 2nd dose of a vaccine.

Most children and young people aged 12 to 17 are currently only being offered a 1st dose.

[Find out more about who can get a COVID-19 vaccine](#)

How to get your COVID-19 vaccine

If you're aged 16 or over you can:

- [Book your COVID-19 vaccination appointments online](#) for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy.
- [Find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site](#) to get vaccinated without needing an appointment.
- Wait to be contacted by your GP surgery and book your appointments with them.



Suffolk and North East Essex COVID-19 Vaccination Service

Has information on:

- Where you can get the vaccine.
- Vaccine eligibility.
- Making an appointment.
- Locations walk-in vaccination sites.
- Attending the appointment.

If you cannot book appointments online, you can call 119 free of charge. You can speak to a translator if you need to.

If you have difficulties communicating or hearing, or are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can use textphone 18001 119 or the [NHS 119 BSL interpreter service](#).

Booking your 2nd dose

Only people aged 18 or over (or turning 18 within 3 months) are currently eligible for a 2nd dose.

You'll need to book a 2nd dose for 8 to 12 weeks after your 1st dose.

- If you book online, you'll be asked to book appointments for both doses. You can [manage your COVID-19 vaccination appointments](#) to view your appointments and rebook if you need to.
- If you had your 1st dose at a walk-in vaccination site, you can [book your 2nd COVID-19 vaccination appointment online](#). You'll need to wait 24 hours after your 1st dose before you can book.
- If you have your 1st dose through your GP surgery, you'll be contacted when it's time to book your 2nd dose.

Types of COVID-19 vaccine

The COVID-19 vaccines currently approved for use in the UK are:

- Moderna vaccine
- Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine
- Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine
- Janssen vaccine (available later this year)

Which vaccine will I get?

You cannot usually choose which vaccine you have. When you book, you'll only be offered appointments for vaccines that are suitable for you.

Most people can have any of the COVID-19 vaccines, but some people are only offered certain vaccines.

For example:

- if you're pregnant or under 40 you'll usually be offered appointments for the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccines

- if you're under 18, you'll only be offered the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine

You should have the same vaccine for both doses, unless you had serious side effects (such as a serious allergic reaction) after your 1st dose.

How well do the COVID-19 vaccines work?

Anyone who gets COVID-19 can become seriously ill or have long-term effects ([long COVID](#)). The COVID-19 vaccines are the best way to protect yourself and others.

Research has shown the vaccines help:

- reduce your risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19
- reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19
- protect against COVID-19 variants

The 1st dose should give you some protection from 3 or 4 weeks after you've had it. But you need 2 doses for stronger and longer-lasting



**I SHOULD'VE GOT THE VACCINE
INSTEAD I GOT REALLY ILL**

If you're unvaccinated, you're about 8 times more likely to be hospitalised with Covid-19 than if you've had both doses of the vaccine and the booster.

GET VACCINATED NOW

NHS.UK/COVIDVACCINATION

protection.

There is a chance you might still get or spread COVID-19 even if you have a vaccine, so it's important to follow advice about [how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19](#).

Side effects and safety

The COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness.

They can cause some side effects, but not everyone gets them.

Any side effects are usually mild and should not last longer than a week, such as:

- a sore arm from the injection
- feeling tired
- a headache
- feeling achy
- feeling or being sick

More serious side effects, such as allergic reactions or blood clotting, are very rare.

[Find out more about COVID-19 vaccines side effects and safety](#)

Pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility

You can get vaccinated against COVID-19 if:

- you're pregnant or think you might be
- you're breastfeeding
- you're trying for a baby or might get pregnant in the future

The vaccines you'll be offered depends if you're pregnant and how old you are. The vaccines cannot give you or your baby COVID-19.

[Find out more about pregnancy, breastfeeding,](#)

[fertility and COVID-19 vaccination](#)

COVID-19 vaccine ingredients

The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain egg or animal products.

The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine contains a tiny amount of alcohol, but this is less than in some everyday foods like bread.

The vaccines are suitable for people of all faiths.

You can find out about the ingredients in the vaccines currently available in the UK:

[Moderna COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)

[Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)

[Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)



CORONAVIRUS VACCINES SAFETY AND SIDE EFFECTS

Millions of people have had a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine and the safety of the vaccines continues to be monitored. Reports of serious side effects are very rare.

Common side effects

Like all medicines, the COVID-19 vaccines can cause side effects, but not everyone gets them.

Most side effects are mild and should not last longer than a week, such as:

- a sore arm from the injection
- feeling tired
- a headache
- feeling achy
- feeling or being sick

You may also get a high temperature or feel hot or shivery 1 or 2 days after your vaccination. You can take painkillers such as [paracetamol](#) if you need to. If your symptoms get worse or you're worried, call 111.

If you have a high temperature that lasts longer than 2 days, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, you may have COVID-19. Stay at home and get a test.

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine, but you may have caught it just before or after your vaccination.

More information

[GOV.UK: what to expect after your COVID-19 vaccination](#)

[GOV.UK: information for children and young people on what to expect after COVID-19 vaccination](#)

Very rare side effects

Allergic reactions

Most people with allergies (including food or penicillin allergies) can be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Tell healthcare staff before you're vaccinated if you've ever had a serious allergic reaction (including anaphylaxis). They may ask what you're allergic to, to make sure you can have the vaccine.

Serious allergic reactions to the COVID-19 vaccines are very rare.

If you do have a reaction, it usually happens in minutes. Staff giving the vaccine are trained to deal with allergic reactions and treat them immediately.

If you have a serious allergic reaction to the 1st dose of a vaccine, you should not have the same vaccine for your 2nd dose.

Blood clotting

The MHRA is carrying out a detailed review of reports of an extremely rare blood clotting problem affecting a small number of people



who had the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.

It's not yet clear why it affects some people.

The COVID-19 vaccine can help stop you getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19. For people aged 40 or over and those with other health conditions, the benefits of being vaccinated with the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine outweigh any risk of clotting problems.

For people under 40 without other health conditions, it's preferable for you to have the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccine instead of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.

[Find out more about COVID-19 vaccination and blood clotting on GOV.UK](#)

Heart inflammation

There have been rare cases of inflammation of the heart reported after COVID-19 vaccination. Most people who had this recovered following rest and simple treatments.

It is not yet clear if it was caused by the vaccines, but get urgent medical advice if you have any of these symptoms within a few days of being vaccinated:

- chest pain
- shortness of breath
- a fast-beating, fluttering or pounding heart (palpitations)

Vaccine leaflets

Find out about the side effects for the COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the UK:

[Moderna COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)

[Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)

[Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)

CALL 111 IMMEDIATELY IF:

You get any of these symptoms starting from around 4 days to 4 weeks after being vaccinated:

- A severe headache that is not relieved with painkillers or is getting worse.
- A headache that feels worse when you lie down or bend over.
- A headache that's unusual for you along with blurred vision, feeling or being sick, problems speaking, weakness, drowsiness or seizures (fits).
- A rash that looks like small bruises or bleeding under the skin.
- Shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling or persistent abdominal (tummy) pain.



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Safer Colchester Partnership for up to date community safety advice.

The Safer Colchester Partnership consists of the Council, Police, Probation, Health and Fire Services and aims to develop and implement a strategy to tackle the problems in the area.

STAY SAFE AT HOME

These are very challenging times for us all, and while the governments advice is to stay home, for some people, home is not a safe place. If you are living with domestic abuse and feel even more isolated and at risk please remember there is help available.

Stay Safe at Home is a new initiative to raise awareness of five common risks people may face at the moment.

- domestic abuse.
- child abuse.
- accidental fire/fire safety.
- fraud.
- bogus callers.

Support the campaign on social media by using

#ProtectingandServingEssex,

#StaySafeAtHome and

#StayHomeSaveLives.

More information can be found [here](#)

Twelve tips for Christmas and after

With Christmas rapidly approaching here are a few seasonal tips to help keep you safe at home, shopping, visiting, and after Christmas too:

- If you need to store Christmas food and drink, presents and other goodies within garages and outbuildings, ensure what you are storing is out of sight and that the building is securely locked with good quality well fitted locks. Treat your shed to a shed alarm.
- Avoid tempting window shopping burglars; don't leave presents and valuables on full view in front of a window. Having parcels delivered, may be out, make sure that you make suitable secure delivery arrangements to reduce the risk of theft.
- Whenever leaving the house always ensure that your windows and doors are closed and locked (remember your face covering). Don't attract burglars to your home by leaving it in darkness; leave lights on timers, perhaps treat yourself to a TV simulator too.
- Lock gates to keep unwanted visitors from getting to the rear of your home.
- When you go to leave the house and find that your car is all iced up, don't leave it unattended with the engine running to de-ice it. It only takes a second to steal your car and it would invalidate any insurance claim.
- Park safely; look for a Parkmark accredited car park www.parkmark.co.uk/car-park-finder Check that your car is locked before you leave it and don't leave valuables and gifts on display in your car.

Fake Products / Websites

Fake coronavirus (COVID-19) testing/treatment kits are been produced and sold worldwide. These kits contain harmful chemicals and police are warning anyone who has bought one of these kits not to use it. Report to **Action Fraud**, quoting “Trinity CV19 treatment kits

- Whether an evening out or Christmas shopping keep your bags, handbags, wallets and mobile safe. Busy places make it easier for the sneak thief, so be alert at all times.
- A Christmas get together – make sure that you have considered how you are getting home in advance and avoid using unlicensed taxi's. Ensure you drink responsible, social distance and are aware of your surroundings, whilst keeping your drink and belongings safe. www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/personal-safety
- Watch what you put on social media; check your settings to ensure that you are not broadcasting when you are not at home and the lovely gifts you may have received.
- After Christmas don't advertise your nice gifts to the thieves by putting the empty boxes out for collection, disguise them, fold them up inside out or put them inside another non-descript box.
- Record your new property free on www.immobilise.com , install tracking and security apps on relevant electrical and computer products.

Have a Great Christmas and New Year!!

For further crime prevention advice see:

www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/ or <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/crime-prevention-advice>

FOR ADVICE ON SCAMS

Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on **0800 2231133**

To report a scam call Action Fraud on **0300 1232040**

Contact your bank if you think you have been scammed

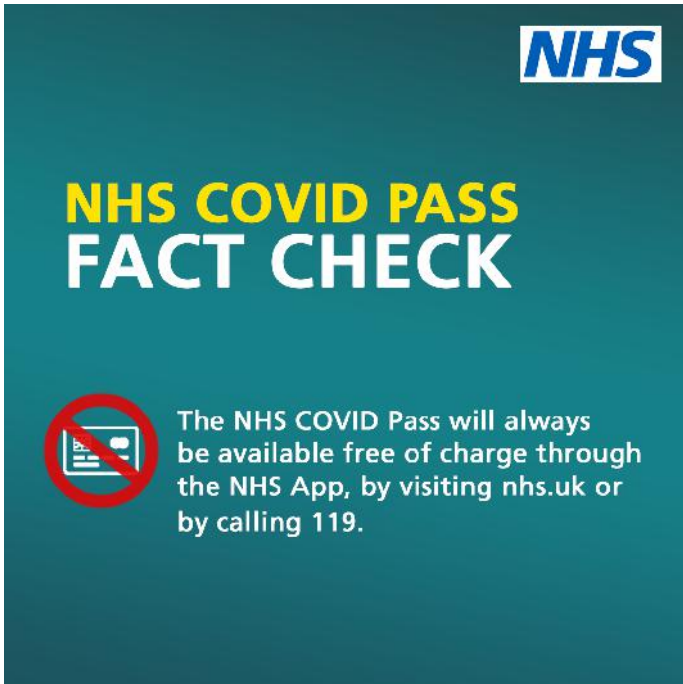
[Little Book of Scams](#)

[Victim Support Advice for Individuals Scammers and Fraudsters](#)

[Victim Support Advice for Groups Scammers and Fraudsters](#)

[Colchester Neighbourhood Watch](#)

[Friends against scams](#) aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams.



The poster features the NHS logo in the top right corner. The main text 'NHS COVID PASS' is in yellow and 'FACT CHECK' is in white, both in a bold, sans-serif font. Below this, there is a red circle with a diagonal line through it, containing a white icon of a smartphone with a speech bubble. To the right of this icon, the text reads: 'The NHS COVID Pass will always be available free of charge through the NHS App, by visiting nhs.uk or by calling 119.'

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL ABUSE HELP

The government acknowledges that coronavirus household isolation instructions can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse. There is never an excuse for domestic abuse, no matter what the circumstances are.

If you feel at risk of abuse, there is help and support available to you, including the police, online support, helplines and refuges. You can find more information about these and other services in this booklet.

Codeword scheme

If you are experiencing domestic abuse and need immediate help, ask for 'ANI' in a participating pharmacy. 'ANI' stands for Action Needed Immediately but also phonetically sounds like the name Annie. If a pharmacy has the 'Ask for ANI' logo on display, it means they're ready to help. They will offer you a private space, provide a phone and ask if you need support from the police or other domestic abuse support services.

Recognise domestic abuse

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is not always physical violence. It can also include:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- threats and intimidation
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, PLEASE CALL 999 IF YOU CAN'T SPEAK PRESS 55

What signs to look for

If you believe that you or someone else could be a victim of domestic abuse, there are signs that you can look out for including:

- being withdrawn, or being isolated from family and friends
- having bruises, burns or bite marks
- having finances controlled, or not being given enough to buy food or pay bills
- not being allowed to leave the house, or stopped from going to college or work
- having your internet or social media use monitored, or someone else reading your texts, emails or letters
- being repeatedly belittled, put down or told you are worthless



- being pressured into sex
- being told that abuse is your fault, or that you're overreacting

See [more signs to look for](#).

Support a friend if they're being abused

Let them know you've noticed something is wrong.

If someone confides in you, there is [more information on how to support a friend who is being abused](#).

If you are worried that someone you know is a victim of domestic abuse, you can call Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline for free, confidential support, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Visit the [helpline website](#) to access information on how to support a friend.

If you believe there is an immediate risk of harm to someone, or it is an emergency, always call 999.

Report it

If you, or someone you know, is a victim of domestic abuse find out how to [report domestic abuse](#).

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police.

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and listen to the questions from the operator and, if you can, respond by coughing or tapping on the handset.

Call 999 from a mobile

If prompted, press 55 to [Make Yourself Heard](#) and this will transfer your call to the police.

Pressing 55 only works on mobiles and does not allow police to track your location.

Call 999 from a landline

If the operator can only hear background noise and cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, you will be connected to a police call handler.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick up again.

When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about your location should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response.

If you are deaf or can't verbally communicate

You can register with the [emergencySMS](#) service. Text REGISTER to 999. You will get a text which tells you what to do next. Do this when it is safe so you can text when you are in danger.

Economic abuse

If you are concerned about how coronavirus may affect your finances and leave you vulnerable to economic abuse, see the [advice provided by HM Treasury](#) on what support is on offer.

The charity [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) has also provided additional coronavirus guidance and support.

Technological abuse

If you are concerned about whether your phone or tablets are being compromised, visit [Refuge's Tech Safety Tool](#) and click on the three pink dots at the bottom of the homepage. The tool offers instructional videos as well as practical real-time tips on how to secure devices such as mobile phones and ensuring your location-tracking or map applications aren't accessible to abusive partners.

Welfare benefits and housing advice

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has published up-to-date [coronavirus-related welfare benefits information](#).

If you are concerned about your financial situation, you can contact [Turn2us](#). They help people to access the money available to them through welfare benefits and grants. Their website has an income-related benefits checker enabling you to check that you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.

[Shelter](#) provide free confidential housing information, support and legal advice on all housing and homelessness issues. They also have an emergency helpline and a webchat service.

Support from your local jobcentre

Even if a jobcentre is closed, staff will still meet their most vulnerable customers including those fleeing domestic abuse.

Jobcentres are a safe space and the [DWP supports victims of domestic abuse](#). This includes helping you access temporary accommodation and supporting you to make new applications for Universal Credit and putting you in touch with local experts and support networks.

Find out more about [help available from the DWP for people who are victims of domestic violence and abuse](#).

Get help if you think you may be an abuser

If you are concerned that you or someone you know may be an abuser, there is support available.

The [Respect Phonenumber](#) is an anonymous and confidential helpline for men and women who are harming their partners and families. The helpline also takes calls from partners or ex-partners, friends and relatives who are

concerned about perpetrators.

A webchat service is available Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10am to 11am and from 3pm to 4pm.

Telephone: 0808 802 4040

Get legal help

Apply for a disclosure of information

Under the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#) (also known as 'Clare's Law'), you can ask the police to check whether a new, former or existing partner has a violent past. This is called 'right to ask'. If records show that you may be at risk of domestic abuse from a partner, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so.

The 'right to ask' also allows a third party, such as a friend or family member, to apply for a disclosure on behalf of someone they know. Again, the police can release information if it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to do so.

- To make an application under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, contact the police. You can do this by:
- visiting a police station (the household isolation instruction as a result of coronavirus does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse)
- phoning 101
- speaking to a member of the police on the street

If you believe there is an immediate risk of harm to someone, or it is an emergency, you should always call 999.

Get a court order to protect you or your child

If you're a victim of domestic abuse you can apply for a court order or injunction to protect yourself or your child from:

- your current or previous partner
- a family member
- someone you currently or previously lived with

This is called a non-molestation or occupation order.

You can apply online, by email or by post.

[Get a court order if you've been the victim of domestic abuse.](#)

If you don't have settled status in the UK

Apply for settlement in your own right

If your relationship with a British citizen or someone settled in the UK has broken down because of domestic abuse you may be able to apply for [settlement as a victim of domestic violence.](#)

The [destitution domestic violence concession](#) provides help if you are in the UK on a temporary visa as a partner, your relationship has broken down because of domestic violence and you have no money to support yourself.

Apply for access to benefits

The destitution domestic violence concession offers domestic abuse victims 3 months' leave outside the immigration rules with the ability to apply for access to public funds. This provides the opportunity to gain a temporary immigration status independent of the abuser and to fund safe accommodation, where victims of domestic abuse may consider

applying for indefinite leave to remain or deciding to return to their country of origin.

More support materials

Read information and practice guidelines for professionals protecting, advising and supporting [victims of forced marriage.](#)

Read the leaflet the Home Office developed with Southall Black Sisters [Three steps to escaping domestic violence, aimed at women in black and minority ethnic communities.](#)

[Refuge](#)'s website includes resources to help you [identify the signs of domestic abuse](#), and a safety guide for women and children who are living with a perpetrator. It also has a [tech abuse chat-bot](#) with step-by-step instructional videos on how to secure devices such as phones and laptops. Look for the pink button in the bottom-right corner.

The NSPCC has issued [guidance for spotting and reporting the signs of abuse.](#)

[The Survivor's Handbook](#), created by Women's Aid, provides information on housing, money, helping your children and your legal rights.

[WOMEN'S AID](#) - Recognise the signs of domestic abuse. Women's Aid have also launched an online message service open Monday - Friday 10am - 12pm. To talk to someone please [visit.](#)

[GALOP DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE](#)

The Galop domestic abuse helpline offers emotional and practical support for LGBT+ people experiencing domestic abuse. Abuse is not always physical - it can be psychological, emotional, financial and sexual too. Tel:0800 999 5428

Domestic abuse perpetrator?

Do you need to change how you treat your

COMPASS - COMPASS is a single point of access funded by Essex County Council in partnership with the Office of Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to support victims of domestic abuse across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. It is available 24hrs a day, for callers to speak with a trained member of staff who will complete an assessment and ensure contact is made with the most appropriate support service.

There is an easy to use online form for both the public and professionals wishing to make a referral. You can contact them on **0330 3337444** or by emailing **enquiries@essexcompass.org.uk**.

NEXT CHAPTER – provides free and confidential services to support people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. Their website contains useful information, explains the types of abuse and common warning signs together with practical advice about staying safe and obtaining support.

For all new referrals to Next Chapter or contact Compass on **0330 333 7444**.

Next Chapter have also recently added an **online chat facility**.

partner in your relationship? Do you frequently put your partner down, criticise them or humiliate them? Are you being physically violent, emotionally abusing, controlling or intimidating? In these challenging times, emotions can become heightened, but abuse is not acceptable. Change your abusive behaviour by getting help **here**.

THE CHANGE PROJECT

For those concerned by their behaviour.

SEXUAL ABUSE

CARA (Centre for action on rape and abuse)

01206 769795. Open and supporting victims of sexual violence via telephone support whilst all staff work from home. The office is running on an answer machine, so the quickest and easiest way to refer into them, is via **Synergy Essex** the rape crisis partnership that covers Essex. In an emergency, please dial 999. CARA offer specialist therapy, advocacy support and independent sexual violence advisors to guide victims through the criminal justice process.

Synergy Essex provides support and information for anyone who has been sexually abused or raped or has been affected by sexual violence at any time in their lives. 0300 003 7777 or email **support@synergyessex.org.uk**.

Below are the National Helplines:

National Domestic Violence Helpline-0808 2000 247

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0800 999 5428

Respect - 0808 802 4040

Men's Advice Line - 0808 801 0327

Shelter - 0800 800 4444

NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000

ChildLine - 0800 1111

Samaritans - 116 123

Pharmacies launch codeword scheme to offer 'lifeline' to domestic abuse victims

Victims of domestic abuse will be able to access much needed support from thousands of pharmacies across the UK, backed by the government.

The Ask for ANI scheme allows those at risk or

suffering from abuse to discreetly signal that they need help and access support. By asking for ANI, a trained pharmacy worker will offer a private space where they can understand if the victim needs to speak to the police or would like help to access support services such as a national or local domestic abuse helplines.

As an essential retailer based on high streets across the country, and with specifically trained staff, pharmacies can provide a safe space for victims to sound an alarm if they are isolated at home with their abuser and unable to get help in another way.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

The Essex County Council Children & Families Hub will remain in operation with no changes to threshold decisions.

The Priority Line (for children at risk of immediate danger) remains open alongside the Consultation Line.

Call **0345 603 7627** and ask for the Children & Families Hub. Please also state if you are a member of public or a professional.

Members of the public will speak to a Family Adviser who will discuss and identify the right services that will help to meet the family's needs.

Essex Safeguarding Children's Board

The Essex Safeguarding Children's Board website has launched a dedicated [Coronavirus webpage](#) which aims to provide a single point of access for anyone needing information and resources in relation to safeguarding children and young people. These pages will outline any temporary changes to multi-agency safeguarding

procedure and guidance. The Children and Families Service continues to prioritise support through continued contact with high risk child protection cases, children- in-care and young people living in semi-independent accommodation.

There are also pages with general information signposting to national and local advice and support, and resources for families. They have also produced a list of online safety.



HATE CRIME

The police have advised that during this time there have been a small minority of people who have targeted individuals and communities for abuse in relation to COVID-19. There has been significant increase in hate crimes and incidents targeting the Chinese and South Asian communities and an increase in far right, anti Muslim and antisemitic online activity.

They are concerned that residents feel reluctant to report crimes and incidents as they believe the police have priorities elsewhere.

They are urging people to come forward if they have been a victim of a hate crime or incident.

This will become even more important as lockdown restrictions ease and people from different communities come into regular contact with each other again.

What is a Hate Crime?

Hate crime is any incident, which may constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate because of a person's:

Race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality or national origins, includes Gypsies and Travellers.

Religion or faith and can include no faith.

Gender identity includes Transphobia i.e. resentment or fear of transgender people or transvestites.

Sexual orientation. Including Homophobia - resentment or fear of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual people. Also resentment or hatred of heterosexual people.

Disability – any physical, sensory or mental impairment whether short or long-term. Includes learning disability or difficulty.

Hate Crime Can Take Many Forms Including:

Physical attacks – such as physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti, neighbour disputes and arson.

Threat of attack – including offensive letters, abusive or obscene telephone calls and other intimidating behaviour as groups or individuals.

Verbal abuse or insults, abusive gestures.

Other abuse – offensive leaflets and posters, dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes, unfounded and malicious complaints and bullying at home, online, in school or in the workplace.

Hate Crime Helpline for anyone in the UK who has experienced anti-LGBT+ abuse, violence or harassment. <https://www.consortium.lgbt/2021/02/02/launch-of-lgbt-hate-crime-helpline/>

The LGBT+ Hate Crime Helpline, launched by Galop, is open Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm, and can be reached on 020 7704 2040 or by emailing HateCrime@galop.org.uk.

Galop can provide independent advice, support, and signposting to local organisations. Their helpline is run by LGBT+ people for LGBT+ people, and it is completely confidential. Anyone affected by anti-LGBT+ abuse can talk to the helpline team about abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, or violence they've experienced because of their orientation or gender identity. It is operated by Galop, the LGBT+ anti-violence charity supporting people facing hate crime, domestic abuse and sexual violence. Find out more at www.galop.org.uk.

Victims of anti-LGBT+ abuse can also contact Victim Support's confidential 24/7 Supportline on 0808 168 9111, particularly if a victim requires support outside of Galop's operating hours - www.victimsupport.org.uk.

**Vaccination/Fresh Air/Testing/Face Covering/
Stay Home/Hand Washing**