

If you need to self-isolate what should you do?

People will be required by law to [self-isolate](#) from 28 September if told to do so or who develop symptoms.

We've put together the enclosed FAQs to help you do so.

Self-isolation is hard. It means you can't go out of your house and can mean that you will be alone for two weeks. There is support available in these circumstances.

But people are being asked to self isolate because we need to stop the virus being passed on from people to people. Because it takes up to two weeks for symptoms to develop it means that if you have the virus you could pass it on to so many people before you know it.

We need to stop that happening.

If you have no means of support please contact our support helpline by calling **01204 337221**.

There are also sources of support and information that can help, such as the [Every Mind Matters](#) website.

When do you need to self-isolate?

You need to [self-isolate](#) if:

- You develop symptoms of coronavirus
- You arrive back in the UK from a country that is not on the [exemptions list](#)
- You have been contacted by Test and Trace and told you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive

What is self-isolation?

Self-isolation means that you need to stay at home, away from other people.

This means:

- You cannot go shopping
- You cannot take your dog for a walk
- You cannot go to your workplace
- You cannot play sports or go out for exercise
- You cannot go to a place of worship
- Do not invite or allow social visitors, such as other friends or family, to enter your home.
- If you or a family member receive essential care in your home, then carers should continue to visit. Carers should follow the relevant guidance to reduce the risk of you passing on the infection.
- You should cancel all routine medical appointments but please speak with your doctor, GP, hospital etc

You should not have visitors, including friends and family, unless they are providing:

- emergency assistance

- care or assistance, including personal care
- medical assistance
- veterinary services
- certain critical public services

If you have symptoms the people you live with have to isolate as well (see below).

If you have been contacted by Test and Trace or returning from holiday and have to self-isolate then the people you live with don't have to self-isolate (see below). You should keep your distance from them, eat and prepare food separately, clean toilets, clean baths etc once you have washed.

It's important to avoid as much contact with other people as possible in your home in order to reduce the risk of transmitting coronavirus. You should stay in a well-ventilated room with a window to the outside that can be opened, separate from other people in your home.

Staying at home will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

What should I do if my child is asked to self-isolate from school?

If your child has symptoms and is sent home from school then you and all your family needs to self isolate.

If your child is sent home from school because someone else in their bubble has symptoms, they need to stay at home, but others in your household don't need to self isolate unless anyone in your household develops symptoms.

It means:

- You need to keep your child at home
- Your child can't go out
- Your child can't go to school
- Your child can't go shopping with you
- Your child can't go out to play
- Your child can't go out to take part in sports activities
- Your child can't attend out of school clubs or extra curricular activities, including sports clubs
- You can't send your child to any childcare. It is really important that you are honest with your provider
- Friends of family who do not live with you or are not part of a childcare or support bubble must not visit your home to help with childcare.
- You cannot take them to a place of worship

If your child develops symptoms then please book a test.

We know this can be difficult, especially if you have no one else to support please contact our support helpline by calling **01204 337221**.

There are also sources of support and information that can help, such as the [Every Mind Matters](#) website.

What should I do as I have one child isolating due to a positive Covid-19 test in their school bubble, and have another two more children at school that I need to take and pick up?

Please form a support bubble or childcare support bubble. If this is not possible please contact our support helpline by calling 01204 337221.

If I develop symptoms what should I do?

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, you need to self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started.

You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to [testing](#) to arrange. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

What are the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)?

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

How long do I need to self-isolate for?

- 10 days if you develop symptoms and [book a test](#).
14 days for the people you live with. If they develop symptoms they should book a test.
- 14 days - if you are returning from holiday from a non-exempt country
- 14 days - if you are contacted by Test and Trace because you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, then you need to self-isolate for

What about the people I live with?

If you develop symptoms the people you live with need to self-isolate for 14 days.

You may be contacted by Test and Trace and told to self-isolate, because you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive.

If so the people you live with don't need to self isolate unless they are specifically told to do so. You should keep your distance from them, eat and prepare food separately, clean toilets, clean baths etc once you have washed.

It's important to avoid as much contact with other people as possible in your home in order to reduce the risk of transmitting coronavirus. You should stay in a well-ventilated room with a window to the outside that can be opened, separate from other people in your home.

Not all these measures will be possible if you are living with children or people with significant conditions such as learning disabilities, autism or serious mental illness. Please keep following this guidance to the best of your ability, whilst keeping yourself and those close to you safe and well, ideally in line with any existing care plans.

I have a clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable person living with me. What should I do?

Where possible, arrange for anyone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable to move out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of your self-isolation period.

If you cannot arrange for vulnerable people to move out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible, following the guidance here. For the clinically extremely vulnerable please follow the Shielding guidance.

Those who are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable should be supported to take precautions to minimise their contact with other people in your household, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not. They should minimise time spent in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas. Any shared spaces should be well ventilated.

If they can, clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable people should use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. If this is not possible, consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with the clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable person using the facilities first. They should use separate towels from the rest of the household, both for drying themselves after bathing or showering and when washing their hands.

If they can, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable members of the household should have their meals in their own rooms. If you have one, use a dishwasher to clean and dry the family's used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them using your usual washing up liquid and warm water and dry them thoroughly. If the clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable person is using their own utensils, remember to use a separate tea towel for drying these.

It will be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others at home. You need to do your very best to follow this guidance and everyone in your household should regularly wash their hands, avoid touching their face, and clean frequently touched surfaces.

Cleaning and disposal of waste

When cleaning you should use your usual household products, like detergents and bleach, as these will be very effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, handrails, remote controls and tabletops. This is particularly important if you have a clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable person in the house.

Clean a shared bathroom each time you use it, for example, by wiping the surfaces you have touched.

Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied

securely and kept separate from other waste. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in your usual external household waste bin.

Other household waste can be disposed of as normal.

Laundry

To minimise the possibility of dispersing virus through the air, do not shake dirty laundry.

Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All dirty laundry can be washed in the same load.

If you do not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after your self-isolation has ended when you can then take the laundry to a public launderette.

Do not share towels, including hand towels and tea towels.

I've been told to self-isolate but don't have symptoms. Can I get a test so I can return to work?

If you are self-isolating you need to self-isolate for the full 14 days.

You should only get a test if you have symptoms.

If you don't have symptoms but do manage to get a test and it is negative then you still need to continue to self-isolate for the full 14 days. This is because the virus takes up to 14 days to develop and you could spread it unknowingly

How do I self-isolate when I travel to the UK?

When you arrive in the UK, you will not be allowed to leave the place where you're staying for the first 14 days you're in the UK (known as 'self-isolating') unless you're arriving from an [exempt country](#).

This is because it can take up to 14 days for coronavirus symptoms to appear. If you're travelling to the UK for less than 14 days, you will be expected to self-isolate for the length of your stay.

If you're travelling from an exempt country you will not need to self-isolate. You should check the list of [exempt countries](#) before you travel.

If you travel from an exempt country but have been in a country that is not exempt within the last 14 days, you will need to self-isolate for the remainder of the 14 days since you were last in a non-exempt country.

You need to [complete the public health passenger locator form](#) 48 hours before you arrive. You must present these details on your arrival in England.

There's further information about your [employment rights on return to the UK following a period of travel](#) on the government website.

If you cannot safely self-isolate for 14 days, you should tell Border Force Officers when you pass through UK border controls. They will provide you with details of a booking service which you can use to obtain accommodation and self-isolate in at your own expense.

Why is self-isolating important?

When you arrive in the UK, or are contacted by Test and Trace, it is very important that you stay in your accommodation for 14 days.

It can take up to 14 days for you to develop coronavirus symptoms after you catch the virus and in this time you can unknowingly pass it on to others, even if you don't have symptoms.

Getting a negative test result makes no difference. You still need to isolate for 14 days.

Self-isolating will reduce the chance of a second wave of coronavirus in the UK and help prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the NHS.

Arrivals from countries that are exempt from the requirement will not be required to self-isolate, because they're travelling from places that have been assessed as low risk.

I'm self-isolating and develop symptoms. What should I do?

Book a free test on www.nhs.uk/coronavirus at a drive in centre or to get a home test.

Please don't turn up at a drive or walk-in in centre without an appointment.

Please keep trying the website if it does not show the Bolton sites. Appointments are released in batches throughout the day.

If your symptoms worsen within your 14-day isolation period, then please contact NHS 111 again and follow their advice.

I've been told to self-isolate but I don't have symptoms. Can I get a test and return to work?

Anyone who is isolating because they have been contacted by Test and Trace, or returned from holiday from a non-exempt country, needs to self isolate for the full 14 days.

You should only get a test if you develop symptoms.

If you apply for a test without symptoms you could be taking the place of someone who needs one.

Getting a negative test result makes no difference. You still need to isolate for 14 days because symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear.

How do I self-isolate where I am staying?

You should self-isolate in one place for the full 14 days, where you can have food and other necessities delivered, and should stay away from others unless you travelled to the UK with them.

If you are returning from holiday from a [non-exempt country](#). You must self-isolate at the address you provided on the public health passenger locator form.

This can include:

- your own home
- staying with friends or family
- a hotel or other temporary accommodation

You should not have visitors, including friends and family, unless they are providing:

- emergency assistance
- care or assistance, including personal care
- medical assistance
- veterinary services
- certain critical public services

You cannot go out to work or school or visit public areas. You should not go shopping. If you require help buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, you should ask friends or relatives or order a delivery.

In England, you must only exercise within your home or garden. You cannot leave your home to walk your dog.

If you're staying in a hotel or guest house, you must stay away from others who didn't travel with you, so it's important that you don't use shared areas such as bars, restaurants, health clubs and sports facilities. Stay 2 metres apart from other people staying there at all times.

Can I get help when I am self-isolating?

Residents who have tested positive for the virus and who have been asked to isolate by the NHS Test and Trace service could qualify for a £500 support payment if they cannot work and face a loss of income.

People who have been told to isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive could also be eligible.

Who is eligible for the payment?

- You have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because you have tested positive for coronavirus or because you are the close contact of a positive case
- You are employed or self-employed
- You are in receipt of at least one of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income based Job Seeker's Allowance or Pension Credit
- You are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result

How do I apply?

Applications for the support payment can be made online via the Bolton Council website from October 12.

For full details visit bolton.gov.uk/benefits/test-trace-payments

Further help

We know it isn't easy for everyone to self-isolate. Staying at home may be difficult, frustrating or lonely, but there [are things that you can do to help make it easier](#).

Please call our helpline if you do not have a network of family and friends you can call upon for support.

Please call **01204 337221**. The opening hours are:

- Monday to Friday from 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Saturdays from 9am – 1.30pm

We can help with food and essential items such as medication, and other support.

If you can't ring then please use our [coronavirus support online form](#).

You can access the existing Council Tax Hardship Scheme and other support initiatives such as the Local Welfare Provision Scheme. Find out more <https://bit.ly/2K67E9F>

Our [Bolton Money Skills Service](#) can help you if you get into debt, with budgeting, with energy advice, and other money worries.

NHS Volunteer Responders are also on hand to have a friendly chat. If you would like a telephone 'check in and chat' please call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm) to arrange volunteer support.

Further advice is available on the NHS website: <https://bit.ly/3iR9kn1>

There are also sources of support and information that can help, such as the [Every Mind Matters](#) website.

What do I do if I have problems self-isolating?

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness or the illness of someone in your household is worsening. If it's not an emergency, contact the [NHS 111 online](#) COVID-19 service. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111.

If it is a medical emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that you or your relative have COVID-19 symptoms.

There may be other circumstances which may permit you to leave your place of self-isolation.

It may be useful to seek advice from a medical or other professional to discuss your circumstances so that you can decide whether, for example, you have a health condition or a disability that would be seriously exacerbated if you were not able to leave the accommodation (and its outdoor areas) where you are self-isolating to take exercise.

In very limited circumstances, you change the location of where you are self-isolating. These are:

- a legal obligation requires you to change address, such as where you are a child whose parents live separately, and you need to move between homes as part of a shared custody agreement
- it is necessary for you to stay overnight at accommodation before travelling to the place where you will be self-isolating for the remainder of the 14 days
- there are exceptional circumstances in which it becomes impracticable to remain at the original address

If this happens and you are self-isolating because of returning from a country on the non-exempt list, you should provide full details of each address where you will self-isolate on the public health passenger locator form.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you cannot remain where you are staying, you must complete a new form as soon as possible.

Washing your hands and keeping good hygiene

Everyone should wash their hands regularly, but this is particularly important for people who have recently travelled to the UK because you could have contracted coronavirus and not yet developed symptoms.

Wash your hands frequently with soap and hot water, for at least 20 seconds, rinse and dry thoroughly. Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of tissues into a plastic waste bag, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, rinse and dry thoroughly.

What do I do after self-isolating?

If you do not have any coronavirus symptoms after 14 days, you can stop self-isolating.

If you arrived in the UK more than 14 days ago, you do not need to continue self-isolation once you have had symptoms for 10 days and your temperature has returned to normal. Symptoms of a cough or changes to your sense of smell or taste can last for several weeks after the infection has gone and so you can stop self-isolating even if you have these symptoms.

The household you are staying with should self-isolate for 14 days from the point that your symptoms start.

You will then need to follow the same rules as people who live in the UK. Check the rules for the part of the UK you're staying in:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

I've been self-isolating and it has finished but then I develop symptoms. What should I do?

If you develop new symptoms just after your previous isolation period ended you need to self-isolate for 10 days and book a new test.

Anyone you live with needs to self-isolate for 14 days.