

Dear All,

We continue to monitor the ongoing developments regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19) and want to take this opportunity to update you about the measures the Surgery are taking to protect you, your family, our staff and ourselves, and the wider community.

All updated information can be found on **111.nhs.uk/covid-19**

Stay at home if you have either:

* a high temperature (above 37.8) – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
* a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly
* do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital

Testing for Coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home and you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.

* If you have symptoms, stay at home for at least 7 days
* If you live with other people, they should stay at home for at least 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms
* If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.

**Returning from holiday**

If you have returned from holiday in the last 14 days, from one of the hotspots i.e. Spain or Italy, we advise that you self-isolate for 14 days from your day of arrival back to the UK….even if you do not have a new persistent cough or fever. This is a precautionary measure to help protect your loved ones.

**Sick Notes**

Add guidance

**Advice for patients with increased risks**

NHS 111 are advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.

This group includes those who are:

* aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
* under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
	+ chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/asthma/), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease-copd/), emphysema or [bronchitis](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bronchitis/)
	+ chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heart-failure/)
	+ [chronic kidney disease](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/)
	+ chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hepatitis/)
	+ chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson’s disease](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/parkinsons-disease/), [motor neurone disease](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/motor-neurone-disease/), [multiple sclerosis (MS)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/multiple-sclerosis/), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
	+ [diabetes](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diabetes/)
	+ problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sickle-cell-disease/) disease or if you have had your spleen removed
	+ a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hiv-and-aids/), or medicines such as [steroid tablets](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/steroids/) or [chemotherapy](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chemotherapy/)
	+ being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
* those who are pregnant

Note: there are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, next week the NHS in England will directly contact you with advice the more stringent measures you should take in order to keep yourself and others safe. For now, you should rigorously follow the social distancing advice in full, outlined below.

People falling into this group are those who may be at particular risk due to complex health problems such as:

* people who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
* people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy
* people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment
* people with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
* people with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)

**What is social distancing?**

Explain and cross reference adults / children, i.e. with children now out of school not to take them to the cinema, etc consider how they gather in the community and not to have grandparents cover for them etc.

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible
3. Work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to [employer guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19) for more information
4. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media
6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

Everyone should be trying to follow these measures as much as is pragmatic.

We strongly advise you to follow the above measures as much as you can and to significantly limit your face-to-face interaction with friends and family if possible, particularly if you:

* are over 70
* have an underlying health condition
* are pregnant

This advice is likely to be in place for some weeks.

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| **Looe Coronavirus Support Group**For patients who are self-isolating, following stringent social distancing and/or are reliant on the regular support of others who may also be self-isolating, including picking up shopping and medications etc, our wonderful community have rallied around and brought together a team of amazing volunteers to help. Here to help, you can reach them be calling **01503 804099**, 7 days a week between 8am-8pm. Alternatively, you can email support@looetowncouncil.gov.uk. |

Finally, continue to keep connected with your friends and loved ones through phone calls, texts or the internet. Keep up to date through media and social media, but avoid excessive exposure.

Make extra time for self-care and stress relief and if you are self-isolating, create a daily routine and keep busy.

Look after yourself, your family, neighbours and anyone vulnerable. Kindness and mutual support are much needed in these uncertain times.

Thank you for your understanding.

Dr Kodde, Dr Mogford, Dr Buchanan and Dr Roy

20/03/2020