

New guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection

New guidance to stay at home for 14 days if someone in your household has symptoms of COVID-19 is the focus of the next stage of a public awareness campaign launched by Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock today.

The new guidance will set out that individuals will still be asked to self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of COVID-19 symptoms but any individuals in the household will now be asked to self-isolate for 14 days from that moment as well.

If other members of your household develop symptoms, however mild, at any time during the 14 days, they must not leave the home for 7 days from when symptoms started.

The new phase of the campaign will build on the existing TV, radio, online, digital and billboard adverts currently visible all over the country. These reinforce the importance of washing your hands more often and for 20 seconds, and ask people to self-isolate for 7 days if they develop a high temperature or a new continuous cough, however mild.

Government has taken the further measure of asking whole households to isolate because it is likely that people living with others will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

The Prime Minister also today set out a number of social distancing measures to reduce the risk of infection from the spread of coronavirus. For those who remain well, are under 70 or do not have an underlying health condition, they are advised to limit their social contact where possible, including using less public transport, working at home and considering not going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and bars.

For those who are over 70, have an underlying health condition or are pregnant, they are strongly advised against these activities and to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with friends and family if possible.

The government's public awareness campaign offers clear, practical advice so people can play their part in preventing and slowing the spread of the virus.

The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves remains washing their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Make sure you cough or sneeze into a tissue, put it in a bin and wash your hands.

The awareness campaign also reiterates the importance of seeking help online by visiting [NHS.UK/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) to check your symptoms and follow the medical

advice, rather than visiting your GP. It also urges people with any symptoms to avoid contact with older and more vulnerable people.

Only if symptoms become worse should people use the NHS 111 service. To ensure the phone service is readily available to those who need it, where possible people should use the 111 website rather than calling.

Earlier this month, the Prime Minister published a '[battle plan](#)' for tackling the disease in the UK, which sets out plans for a range of scenarios. Last week, the Prime Minister confirmed the UK has [moved into the second stage of this plan, the 'delay' phase](#).

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Coronavirus is the biggest public health crisis we have faced in a generation, and we will do whatever is necessary to protect our elderly and most vulnerable people and keep the public safe.

This is an unprecedented situation and it's so important for each of us to rally together and do our bit to protect ourselves and each other, as well as our NHS, from this disease.

Washing hands regularly for 20 seconds or more remains the single most important thing each of us can do, but we now also need to ask everyone in a household to stay at home if anyone in their home shows symptoms.

Combating this virus will require a huge national effort. We must do all we can to save lives, protect the NHS and keep the most vulnerable people in our society safe.