

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COVID19 Questions

What are the symptoms?

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

When to get tested and who should get tested: If you have **any** of the COVID19 symptoms, even just one, it's important that you get a test. This will help stop the spread of the virus. If you don't have COVID19 symptoms do not try to book a test as you could be taking a test away from someone who really needs it. This is increasingly important as we head into autumn and winter and more people will get colds and the flu. Only if you have **any one of the three symptoms above** should you book a test.

COVID19 Test results: If you have had a test and are chasing the results please contact the coronavirus testing helpline: 0300 303 2713 who will be able to help or point the people in the right direction. Due to each test having a Unique Reference Number (URN) individuals have to follow up the test results themselves. **GP practices cannot chase results as we have no access to the testing system.**

I can't get a COVID19 test: Test slots are released throughout the day and individuals are advised to regularly check the Gov.UK website or phone 119 if no tests are available. In addition, if the nearest testing facility is too far away the advice is to log off the site and retry as the system will search for the nearest location and will update when additional slots are made available. **GP practices cannot book a test as we have no access to the testing system.**

When to self-isolate: You must self-isolate when you, or any of your household members or members of your support bubble, develop one of the COVID19 symptoms listed above.

- If you have symptoms of COVID19 however mild, self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID19. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. If you are not experiencing symptoms but have tested positive for COVID19, self-isolate for at least 10 days, starting from the day the test was taken. If you

develop symptoms during this isolation period, restart your 10 day isolation from the day you developed symptoms. After 10 days, if you still have a temperature you should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice. You do not need to self-isolate after 10 days if you only have a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.

- If you live with others, all other household members need to stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14 day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms appear, regardless of what day they are on in their original 14 day isolation period.
- You return from a country where a period of quarantine is needed. You need to self-isolate for 14 days even if you do not have any of the symptoms. Do not ask for a test unless you develop one of the three symptoms. Even if this test comes back with a negative result, you must continue to isolate for the full 14 days.
- You are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID19. You need to self-isolate for 14 days even if you do not have any of the symptoms. Do not ask for a test unless you develop one of the three symptoms. Even if this test comes back with a negative result, you must continue to isolate for the full 14 days.

What is self-isolating? You and everyone else in your household needs to remain at home. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transport or taxis. Nobody should go out even to buy food or other essentials, and any exercise should be taken within your home. If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog, you should ask friends or family. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online. Delivery drivers should not come into your home, so make sure you ask them to leave items outside for collection.

Can I get a fit note for COVID19 or self-isolation? We cannot provide you with a fit note self-isolation. Please visit www.111.nhs.uk/covid-19 and an isolation note can be issued for you to provide to your workplace. You can get one if you:

- have any one of three symptoms
- live, or are in a support bubble with, someone who has any one of the three symptoms
- have been told to self-isolate by a test and trace service

Can I have an appointment so you can check if I have COVID19? No. We cannot diagnose you with COVID19 and will always ask you to get a test if you are displaying symptoms. If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, then use the NHS 111 online COVID19 service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111.

Other questions

I was referred to the hospital a while ago but haven't heard from them yet:

Unfortunately, hospitals are dealing with a large backlog of appointments following the lockdown period. Due to the extra precautions that have to be in place, appointments that are going ahead are taking longer. The hospital cannot provide up to date waiting times for appointments as this changes so regularly and varies between each department. We are unable to check where you are on the waiting list as we cannot access the hospital system. Please be assured that **the hospital will contact you** as soon as an appointment is available and are doing everything they can to work through the waiting list as quickly as possible.

Why can't I book a face to face appointment with a GP? We are following NHS England guidelines and are booking all patients an initial telephone consultation with a GP. The GP will assess you and offer advice or treatment over the telephone wherever possible. You will only be offered a face to face GP appointment if the GP needs to examine you. This is to protect both you and our clinical staff. There are also certain things that we are unable to do as this presents a higher risk of infection for our staff such as examination of throats and spirometry testing.

The Medicines Order Line is busy: The Medicines Order Line can be engaged at busy times – please try again later on in the day. We recommend ordering your medication a week before you are due to run out in case there are any issues with ordering your medication. We are unable to take prescription requests over the telephone. You can order medication online by registering for online services and requesting your medication via SystemOnline – see our website for more information.

My medication doesn't come up when I try to order online: If your medication is not showing when you go to order online, you are able to send us a message to request the medication by clicking '**Custom Request**'. This then allows you to type in what you would like to order and sends it to us.

I need a Fit Note for work: You do not need a GP to provide a fit note for your first week off work. You are able to self-certify for one week by visiting www.gov.uk/government/collections/fit-note . If you need longer than one week off work, please contact us when your fit note has run out. It can take 5 working days for your fit note to be produced. You do not need a note advising that you are well enough to return to work – please discuss this directly with your employer.