

Self-Isolation advice leaflet

When to self-isolate and what to do

What is self-isolation? Self-isolation is when you stay at home because you have or might have coronavirus (COVID-19). This helps stop the virus spreading to other people.

Information: Self-isolation is different to:

- [social distancing](#) – general advice for everyone to avoid close contact with anyone you do not live with
- shielding – [advice for people at high risk from coronavirus](#) to stay at home to avoid getting the virus

When to self-isolate. Self-isolate if:

- you have any [symptoms of coronavirus](#) (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- you're waiting for a coronavirus test result
- you've tested positive for coronavirus – this means you have coronavirus
- you live with someone with symptoms, is waiting for a test or has tested positive
- you have been abroad and need to be in quarantine for 14 days

There is separate advice [if you're told by NHS Test and Trace that you've been in contact with a person with coronavirus](#).

Important

If you have coronavirus symptoms, get advice from the NHS 111 online coronavirus service. <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

How to self-isolate. If you're self-isolating, you and anyone you live with must not leave your home.

- **do not** go to work, school or public places – work from home if you can
- **do not** go on public transport or use taxis
- **do not** go out to get food and medicine – order it online or by phone, or ask someone to bring it to your home
- **do not** have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care
- **do not** go out to exercise – exercise at home or in your garden, if you have one
- Information: Find out [how to avoid spreading coronavirus to people you live with](#).

Ask for a test if you have symptoms

Getting tested will help you find out if you and anyone you live with can stop self-isolating. **You must continue to self-isolate whilst waiting for test results.**

Find out about asking for a test to check if you have coronavirus.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Tell people you've been in close contact with that you have symptoms

You may want to tell people you've been in close contact with in the past 48 hours that you might have coronavirus.

What does close contact mean? They do not need to self-isolate unless they're contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service. But they should take extra care to follow [social distancing advice](#), including washing their hands often.

If they get any coronavirus symptoms, they should get advice from the [NHS 111 online coronavirus service](#).

How long to self-isolate

If **you have symptoms** of coronavirus or **have tested positive without any symptoms**, you'll usually need to self-isolate for at least 7 days or until 48hrs after the fever has gone.

If **you live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive without any symptoms**, you'll usually need to self-isolate for 14 days. Read more about [how long to self-isolate](#).

You have **been abroad** and need to remain in quarantine for 14 days from your return.

Get an isolation note for your employer if you're unable to work. If you need to self-isolate, you can get an isolation note to send to your employer as proof you need to be off work. <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/screener-question> . You do not need to get a note from a GP.

If you need help whilst self-isolating, please call Somerset Coronavirus Helpline on 0300 790 6275 who can help with a range of support activities whilst you are staying safe at home.