

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Important Patient Information

**At the moment it can be hard to know what to do if you are unwell.
It is still important to get medical help if you need it.**

What is happening now?

We have been operating under very unusual circumstances recently and access to the surgery has been restricted. We are now in the next phase of the pandemic and focusing on the return of routine chronic condition management and prevention wherever possible.

If you need to contact us

If you need to contact us, do not go into the surgery in person. Visit our website for information or telephone us, we will then give you advice about what to do. You will only be asked to visit the surgery if absolutely necessary.

What are we doing to keep you safe?

You will continue to be triaged remotely, if you need a consultation it will likely be done by telephone or online. We may also offer video consultations if we are able to do so. Please do not come to the surgery unless you have been invited for an appointment or asked to collect medication.

Face coverings

If you are asked to come to the surgery, please always follow the Government guidance and wear a face covering on public transport or when attending the surgery as a visitor or patient. You should be prepared to remove your face covering

at the surgery if asked to do so. Our staff will also be wearing face coverings or face masks. Please be aware that face coverings do not replace social distancing. Face coverings should not be used by children under the age of 3 or those who may find it difficult to manage them correctly. It is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and taking them off. The key thing is it should cover the mouth and nose.

Home visits

If you require a home visit you will be triaged remotely, if you need a consultation it will be by telephone or online, or video if it is available. If a home visit is necessary, the clinician will discuss the process to keep you both safe.

Hospital appointments

If you are advised to go to hospital, it is important to go. Keep going to any appointments you usually have unless you are told not to.

What happens next?

As the gradual easing of lockdown continues, we will review your health needs that may have been put on hold during the pandemic. Referrals will continue to be made as usual and as appropriate.

If you need urgent medical help, use the regular NHS 111 online service.

For information about using the NHS and other health services during coronavirus go to the NHS website, www.nhs.uk.

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Attending the surgery for an appointment

If you are asked to come to the surgery, please note the following:

- Our building is thoroughly cleaned daily
- Before and after every patient the treatment room is cleaned using disinfectant
- All surfaces that could be touched and all medical equipment used are sanitised
- The treatment room will be aired thoroughly to minimise any droplets in the air
- Appointment times have been adjusted to control the number of people in the surgery at any one time, to allow cleaning in between each patient, and to ensure there is no contact between patients arriving and leaving the surgery
- Our doors remain closed to allow only people who have been invited to come in
- Please do not arrive too early for your appointment because you may have to wait outside
- We may screen you before you enter the surgery for symptoms of the virus – please be patient and answer the questions honestly
- You will be required to disclose if you have had a fever or any other symptoms such as a cough, loss of taste or smell, sickness or vomiting, or have been in contact with anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms, suspected of having COVID-19 or have had a COVID-19 positive test result at least 24 hours before
- If you have COVID-19 symptoms, or a member of your household has symptoms, you will not be allowed to enter the surgery and will be advised what to do next
- Please use the hand sanitiser available as soon as you come into the surgery, to avoid transmission of the virus
- Please avoid touching surfaces if possible
- You must wear a face covering but may be asked to remove it during your consultation
- We have set out our waiting areas and chairs to consider social distancing, including a one-way system and floor markings
- Please ensure you always maintain social distancing, at least 2 meters apart
- If you are unable to come alone due to healthcare issues, only one other person should come with you and people from the same household should sit together
- Our reception desk has a transparent screen to ensure safety
- If available, patient toilets will be signposted, and you must wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds
- Our staff will wear face coverings, and may wear full personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks, face shields, gloves, and aprons
- Our clinicians must keep to time to allow them to clean the consulting room before the next patient arrives, so that we can maintain minimum numbers in the waiting areas
- Please use the hand sanitiser as you leave the surgery, to avoid transmission of the virus

If you have any questions about the services we are currently able to provide, or what to do before you come to the surgery, please telephone us.

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Symptoms and Testing

What to do if you have symptoms

If you have any of the COVID-19 symptoms you must isolate for 7 days and members of your household must isolate for 14 days, or 7 days from when they develop symptoms.

Do not leave home if you or anyone you live with has any of the following symptoms:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

How you can get tested

If you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you can ask for a test to check if you have the virus. You can ask for a test for yourself if you have coronavirus symptoms now, or for someone you live with if they have coronavirus symptoms. You need to get the test done in the first 5 days of having symptoms. Do not wait. Ask for the test as soon as you have symptoms.

The test usually involves taking a swab of the inside of your nose and the back of your throat, using a long cotton bud. You can ask for a test online by going to this website <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>.

What if you test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive you will be asked where you have been recently and who you have been in close contact with. This will help the NHS contact anyone who may have caught the virus from you. You will be contacted by email, text, or phone. Text messages will come from the NHS. Calls will come from 0300 0135000. Children under 18 will be contacted by phone wherever possible and asked for their parent or guardian's permission to continue the call. You will be asked to sign in to the NHS Test and Trace contact tracing website at <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk>.

What is NHS Test and Trace?

It helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus. It is important to trace the spread of the virus and isolate new infections to give the NHS an early warning if the virus is increasing again, locally, or nationally.

All information you provide to the NHS Test and Trace service is confidential. No one who is contacted will be told your identity. Anyone you have been in close contact with will be told to stay at home (self-isolate) for 14 days. This is because it can take up to 14 days for coronavirus symptoms to appear.

For the latest NHS information and advice about coronavirus (COVID-19) go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>