



## **A simple guide to recognising and dealing with coronavirus (COVID19) and Flu like symptoms.**

This is the **first** of three simple grab sheets offering a simple guide to recognising and dealing with COVID 19 and flu like symptoms.

**Grab sheet 1.** Identifies some of the key early symptoms of CV19 and Flu and describes what the main difference is between COVID 19 and Flu.

Grab sheet 2. Tells us about the important things to do if you believe someone you support or care for has symptoms of COVID19 or flu like symptoms

Grab Sheet 3. Tells us how to look after yourself if you are caring for someone who is ill with COVID19 or flu like symptoms.

### **1. Key Symptoms of COVID19 and Flu**

The COVID 19 and flu viruses can cause a range of symptoms, including.

- **A High Temperature or Fever** - Normal body temperature is different for everyone and changes during the day however it's typically in the range of 36.5 and 37.5C.

- A high temperature is usually considered to be 38C or above. This is sometimes called a fever. Many things can cause a high temperature, but it's usually caused by the body fighting an infection.
- **Chills** -The term "chills" refers to a feeling of being cold without an apparent cause. You get this feeling when your muscles repeatedly expand and contract and the vessels in your skin constrict. Chills can occur with a fever and cause shivering or shaking.
- **A Persistent Cough** - A cough is a reflex action to clear your airways of mucus and irritants such as dust, smoke or other irritants.
- A "dry cough" means it's tickly and doesn't produce any phlegm (thick mucus). A "chesty cough" means phlegm is produced to help clear your airways.
- **Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** - this means you or the person has noticed they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
- **Difficulty breathing** -Shortness of breath
- **Fatigue** - Feeling constantly tired

#### **Other symptoms may include**

- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Headaches
- Skin conditions
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all the symptoms of COVID 19 or flu.

Symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear from the last contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID19.

The above symptoms can be due to other illnesses including flu.

Older adults and people who have certain underlying conditions like heart, lung disease or diabetes are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and flu like illness.

Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.

## **2. What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?**

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses. Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis.

You can Call NHS 111 who can help if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do or use the [nhs.co.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) website, your Doctor or Health Centre.

This is a very basic guide so for further information you may wish to go to:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>
- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Thanks to :

Dr Arun Chidambaram, Consultant, Mersey Care and Clinical Lead, MH LD & A Northwest Cell and Leanne Armstrong, Senior Manager Health Inequalities, NHSE for checking content.



## **A Simple Guide on recognising and dealing with COVID-19 and Flu like symptoms.**

This is the **second** of three grab sheets offering a simple guide to recognising and dealing with COVID 19 and flu-like symptoms.

Grab sheet 1. Identifies some of the key early symptoms of CV19 and flu and describes what the difference is between COVID 19 and flu.

**Grab sheet 2.** Tells us about the important things to do if you believe someone you support or care for has symptoms of COVID19 or flu like symptoms

Grab Sheet 3. Tells us how to look after yourself if you are caring for someone who is ill with COVID19 or flu like symptoms.

**If you believe someone you support or care for has severe symptoms of CV19 flu or another severe illness**

Phone the NHS on 111 who can help if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do or use the [nhs.co.uk](https://www.nhs.co.uk) website or your Doctor or Health Centre.

If someone is ill in your home or your place of work with COVID19

- Choose a bedroom for the person who is ill where ideally they should stay: A bedroom with a door if at all possible, and they should be encouraged not to come out of their room except to go to the bathroom. No one else should spend time in that room more than absolutely necessary. Children and pets should stay out. Keep a window open in the room if possible, to keep air circulating. Provide tissues and water.
- If you don't have more than one bedroom, give them the bedroom, and sleep on a temporary bed or other temporary furniture like an inflatable mattress or couch bed so you can still use the living room, kitchen and other spaces while they stay in their room.
- Pick a bathroom for the person who is ill only to use: If you have two bathrooms, make one of them the person's bathroom, and don't let anyone else use it. If you don't have two, clean every surface they touch after every time they go to the bathroom, so it's clean when you or other people you live with need to use it.
- Help the person who is sick track their symptoms: Have them take their temperature several times a day, without getting close to them. Write down the readings, and note when new symptoms occur.
- Some people are using pulse oximeters as a painless and reliable way to measure a person's blood oxygen levels. Although some people with COVID19 do not suffer from a change in oxygen levels and oxygen levels can change due to conditions other than COVID19.
- Help them hydrate: Make sure they're drinking a lot of water and other non-alcoholic clear liquids.
- Ease their symptoms: Help them understand how often they can take medicine to reduce their fever. Make sure the person who is ill understands how much to take. If they have a bad cough, help them understand how much cough medicine to take and when.

- Don't let them take more than the recommended dose of any medicine, or use alcohol when taking a medicine that advises against it. Keep track of what the person has taken and when.
- Make sure they keep taking any other medicines they would usually take, unless their doctor has told them to stop.
- Keep them comfortable and ensure their back is well supported by pillows -so they are sitting relatively upright in bed especially if they are having difficulty breathing.
- Ensure if needed they are entertained, while keeping your distance: Make sure they have blankets and pillows, books, magazines, and perhaps a computer radio or TV to pass the time, and a charger for their phone near their bed, so you don't have to regularly go in and out of the room.
- Help them with food, but keep your distance: Find a tray that you can use to bring them food or drinks when they need it.
- Use specific cups, glasses, knives, forks, plates and dishes specifically for the person who is ill to use
- If they can safely without assistance get out of bed: You could put the food and drinks on the tray, and place it outside their closed door. They can open the door, get the tray, eat in their room, and then put the tray back on the floor outside the door and close it.
- If they can't get out of bed: Wear a mask or cloth over your mouth and nose and if you have it any other PPE you have available when you go in their room, and have them cover theirs too.
- Bring their food and drink to their bedside table, and go back after a while to pick it up again, wearing a mask or cloth again. Wash their dishes thoroughly with hot water and soap. Don't touch your face after handling their dishes, and wash your hands thoroughly after you touch anything they ate or drank from.

- Keep their laundry separate: Bring changes of clothes and pajamas to them if they're not already in the sick room. Get your clothes out of the sick room if they're usually stored there.
- Make sure they have a basket or bag in their room to put clothes, towels, flannels or cloths and bedding in. Have them put it outside their door when it's full, or wear a mask or cloth and other PPI if you have it when you go in to get it. Wash their clothes, towels and bedding separately from anyone else's.
- Go through the entire home and use disinfectant spray or wipes to clean everything the person might have touched when they were in the early stages of getting ill, or when they were contagious before developing symptoms.
- This includes tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remote controls, handles on cabinets and refrigerators, desks, toilets, sinks, computer keyboards and mice, tablets, and more. Wash things they wore or used in the days before they were isolated.
- If you have to see someone in person, do it outside the home, preferably outdoors, and stay at least six feet away from them. If they're bringing you something, ask them to put it down and step away so you can pick it up.
- Use technology to connect: It may seem silly to do a video chat with someone in the next room, but it can give the person human contact with you, your children or pets, and others in the home, without spreading the virus. Make sure they can connect virtually with others, too - including relatives, friends, and faith organisations if appropriate. This can ease the loneliness of being ill and stuck in one room.
- Now that you and others in your home have had contact with someone who has or might have COVID-19, you could carry the virus with you to work or into the community or the wider family, even if you don't have symptoms.

If you have a, garden, patio, balcony or porch, spend time there to get outdoors, but stay six feet away from anyone who doesn't live with you.

- Don't be afraid to ask for help or moral support: It's OK to let friends, neighbors and family know that someone you live with is sick, and to seek and accept their help while not letting them near the person. They can bring you shopping from the 'outside world 'and leave them on your doorstep. They could even walk the dog as long as you clean the lead before and after.
- After they're better: Someone who has had COVID-19, whether they have been tested or not, should stay home and away from others home for 14 days after that exposure.
- Afterwards you should do a thorough clean of the room the person was staying in including wiping down all hard surfaces, washing, bedding (including blankets) and vacuuming

This is a very basic guide for further information you may wish to go to

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## **A simple guide to recognising and dealing with COVID19 and Flu like symptoms.**

This is the **third** of three simple grab sheets offering a simple guide on recognising and dealing with COVID 19 and flu like symptoms and what the difference is between

Grab sheet 1. Identifies some of the key early symptoms of COVID19 and Flu and describes what the difference is between COVID 19 and Flu.

Grab sheet 2. Tells us about the important things to do if you believe someone you support or care for has symptoms of COVID19 or flu like symptoms.

**Grab Sheet 3.** Tells us how to look after ourself if we are caring for someone who is ill. with COVID19 or flu like symptoms.

Things you can do to protect yourself and others when caring for someone with COVID19 or flu-like symptoms.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

It's especially important to wash:

- Before eating or preparing food
- Before touching your face

- After using the toilet
- After leaving a public place
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling your mask
- After changing or helping change someone's clothes
- After caring for someone sick
- After touching animals or pets

If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

### **Inside the Home:**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.

Remember that some people without symptoms of Covid-19 may be able to spread virus.

Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.

Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

### **Wearing a Mask**

Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others

You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.

The mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.

Wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Unless there are special reasons why this is not practical.

Avoid placing masks on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.

Throw used tissues in the rubbish bin

Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## **Clean and Disinfect**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, work and kitchen tops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. Then use a household disinfectant.

## **Monitor Your Health Daily**

Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.

Especially important if you are caring for someone- running essential errands, going into the workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.

Take your temperature if symptoms develop.

Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature.

It's likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this winter. Healthcare systems could be overwhelmed treating both patients with flu and patients with COVID-19. This means getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 is more important than ever.

While getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 there are many important benefits, such as:

- Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalisation, and death.
- Getting a flu vaccine can save healthcare resources for the care of patients with COVID-19.

This is a very basic guide for further information you may wish to go to

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