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#### COVID-19 Infection: Discharge after a stay in hospital

# What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus strain that first emerged in China in December 2019.

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

* a new continuous cough
* a high temperature
* loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

For most people COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However if you have any of the symptoms listed you should self-isolate at home.

#### Leaving hospital when you have not had a COVID-19 infection

# What happens once I leave hospital?

Due to your stay in hospital we would advise that you keep visitors to the home to a minimum as well as your visits to busy public areas such as shops for up to 10 days after your admission. We would advise you to continue with strict hand washing and respiratory hygiene (cough or sneeze into a clean tissue or into your upper sleeve if no tissue available, immediate disposing of tissues and washing your hands after coughing or sneezing) and report any COVID related symptoms as per the national guidance to 111.

If you have been in contact with a patient who has COVID during your stay, you will need to isolate for 10 days after the day of contact that you had. I am advising you that this:

* Does not apply to you.
* Does apply to you – the date of contact was ……….and the date for your period of isolation to end is ………..…. As the COVID pandemic has unfolded we have recognised that, despite the best efforts of our staff to continue to deliver high quality care at a very difficult time, a proportion of patients developed COVID whilst in hospital and we offer our sincere apologies for that. Since the early days of the pandemic, we have learnt from international and national experience and research and are putting the learning into practice as soon as it has been published.

If you feel unwell with symptoms of COVID then please contact 111 or your GP for advice.

#### Leaving hospital after a COVID-19 infection

#### When you get home

# What happens once I leave hospital?

At this point you are considered well enough to leave hospital. You will have been prescribed medication if required. If you did not require any prescribed medication then you should be able to manage your symptoms yourself at home. Ensure you stay hydrated and take paracetamol if you have a temperature. To aid recovery, try to avoid spending long periods of time lying flat in bed, trying sitting up or in a chair, or moving around at home.

You must continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the date you tested positive.

You may have a cough or feel tired or breathless for several weeks despite the COVID-19 having cleared, however, if the symptoms persist please call your GP for advice.

If you are still struggling to manage your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse please contact 111

For a medical emergency, dial 999 immediately.

# Can I spread COVID-19 to friends and family?

There is a risk that other members of your household or others that you have been in close contact with over the previous 2 weeks have been exposed to the virus but it is possible that they have not. Therefore each of you should follow the government's isolation guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Please continue to monitor this guidance as it is updated regularly as more evidence becomes available. This will ensure you have the most up to date information on when it is safe to end your self-isolation (and household isolation if you live with others).

Please note that a persistent cough alone does not mean someone must continue to self-isolate beyond the duration advised by the government.

# If I have COVID-19 what does that mean?

The severity and duration of symptoms for people who have COVID-19 can also vary, although symptoms are reported to reduce in most cases within 7 days of symptom onset.

Most people who have COVID-19 will not require admission to hospital and can be sent home to recover naturally. Others will require monitoring in hospital and a small proportion will require treatment in intensive care.

# Can I get COVID-19 again?

You must also self-isolate again if someone you live with (or someone in your support bubble) gets symptoms again. You must self-isolate again even if you've had a positive test result for coronavirus before. You probably have some immunity to coronavirus but it's not clear how long it will last.

# Do I need to wear a facemask?

You may be issued with a mask to wear as you travel home. Find the latest guidance regarding face masks here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home)

[home/staying-safe-outside-your-home](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home)

# What if I feel unwell again?

Monitor your symptoms regularly and if you have any concerns go to: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

# Protecting yourself and others from coronavirus

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| Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water aren’t available | Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and then throw the tissue in the bin and wash your hands. Alternatively, cough or sneeze into your elbow | Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. | Avoid close contact with people who are sick, sneezing or coughing |