

Keep up to date with Coronavirus information

Government guidance on and around Coronavirus change quickly. This page has the information you need to know about Coronavirus.

What are the current restrictions?

Following the Prime Minister's briefing on 27th November there have been some changes to the rules to help decrease the spread of coronavirus.

Face Masks

You must wear a face covering inside shops and on public transport unless you are exempt. People can be exempt due to health conditions which include hidden conditions such as anxiety or panic disorders, autism, breathing difficulties, dementia, reduced vision or if you are with someone who relies on lip reading to communicate. If you wish to use an exemption card or badge, you can download a template.

Isolation

You must self-isolate for 10 days if you are in contact with someone who has the new Omicron variant of Covid 19. This includes children and people who are vaccinated. You will be contacted by Test and Trace.

Boosters

Book your winter vaccines (including your flu vaccine) as soon as possible for maximum protection while spending time with loved ones this festive season. 6 million coronavirus booster jabs will be available in England over the next 3 weeks. The interval between vaccines for booster jabs has now been halved from six months to three months to speed up the programme. All those over 18 will be able to get a booster.

Travel into or out of the United Kingdom

[Travel rules have changed for those coming into the UK.](#) All travellers arriving into the UK will be required to take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test by the end of the second day and self isolate until they have received a negative test result. These PCR tests can be purchased from private providers. **[A number of countries have been added to the red list.](#)** UK residents arriving from these countries must isolate in a government-approved hotel for 10 days and take a PCR test on day 2 and day 8 of their stay.

What is Coronavirus?

Coronavirus or Covid-19 is an infectious disease. It's a newly discovered variant of **[SARS-CoV-2](#)** that is spread easily from person to person by coughing, sneezing and in droplets of saliva. It is the cause of the current global pandemic, which has meant we have all had to stay at home for long periods of time.

Most infected people have mild to moderate symptoms, but others become very poorly. Some experience symptoms for a long time, this is known as Long Covid or post-COVID-19 syndrome. Some need hospital treatment and in the worst cases it can kill. Some people experience no symptoms at all and so they can spread Covid on to others without realising they are infected.

As restrictions are now lifted across the United Kingdom there are still steps we should take to protect ourselves and others. Here's a quick list of information you need to know:

- **[NHS Advice on Covid-19](#)**
 - **[When and how to get tested](#)**
 - **[When to isolate in order to protect ourselves and others](#)**
 - **[Get vaccinated if possible.](#)** Vaccinations are now available for all adults and 16 and 17 year olds in the United Kingdom.
 - **[When to seek additional help with your recovery from Covid](#)**
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The main symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- a new continuous cough
- high temperature
- loss or change in your sense of smell and or taste

[Read more about the symptoms of Covid-19 on the NHS website.](#)

Long Covid or post-COVID-19 syndrome

How long it takes to recover from Covid ranges from a few days to more than 12 weeks. Symptoms can be mild or severe. They include:

- fatigue
- shortness of breath
- joint pain

- nausea
- loss of sense of taste and smell
- depression and anxiety

[Read the full list of symptoms and how to request support from your GP if you think you have Long Covid.](#)

[Your Covid Recovery Website](#) is an NHS website with more information to help guide you through your recovery from Covid-19.

[What is long Covid? Watch the BBC News videos by doctors in 5 South Asian languages](#) including Punjabi, Urdu, Sylheti, Gujarati, Tamil.

You may be invited to take part in the **[HEAL Covid](#)** trial on discharge from hospital.

Testing for Coronavirus

Think you have Covid-19 symptoms?

1. **[Isolate your household](#)**
2. **[Get a full free PCR Covid test](#)**

No Covid Symptoms? Get a lateral flow test

Lateral flow tests are available for free to everyone in the United Kingdom so you can test yourself regularly. These tests are for people without any symptoms. They help to screen people who may not realise they are infected. If you test positive using a lateral flow test you should isolate and book a full PCR Covid test

[You can request a pack of lateral flow tests to be sent to your home](#) or collect a pack from your local pharmacy. You can ask for more packs of tests as needed.

How to avoid catching and spreading

Covid-19 is spread easily from person to person. Many people who are infected don't have symptoms.

[There are a number of things you can do to avoid catching Covid-19 and spreading it to others including:](#)

1. Get vaccinated
2. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds regularly (the time it takes to sing happy birthday twice)
3. **[Hand wash rap](#)**
4. **[Wear a face mask](#)** The World Health Organisation recommends this especially in enclosed spaces.
5. Socially distance: avoid standing or sitting close to others. 2 metres is the safest distance to put between yourself and someone else.

6. Fresh air: open the window or go outside to socialise with others
7. Avoid crowded places
8. Avoid unnecessary travel
9. Work from home, if you can

A well ventilated room can reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection by 70%. Follow all safer behaviours to keep COVID-19 from spreading.

The risk of dying from COVID-19 is 32 times higher among unvaccinated people than those who are double jabbed.

BSL Face mask guidance from North East Ambulance Service

People at higher risk from coronavirus

Some people are more at risk of being very unwell with coronavirus. People in this group are sometimes referred to as “clinically extremely vulnerable”. This includes:

- **people with an existing health condition such as:** diabetes, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, stroke or Parkinson’s.
- **pregnant people**
- older people

There are things you can do if you are in this higher risk group to try to avoid catching Covid-19 such as

- get vaccinated – everyone aged 16 or over can book COVID-19 vaccination appointments now
- wait for at least 21 days after you’ve had your 2nd dose of a COVID-19 vaccine before meeting with people
- meet people outside if possible
- open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- ask friends and family to take a rapid lateral flow test before visiting you
- limit the number of people you meet and avoid crowded places
- wear a face covering when it’s hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day

NHS Guidance currently does not include shielding for people People at Higher Risk

Practical support if you are isolating at home

From 16 August, if you are a contact of someone who has COVID-19 and you are fully vaccinated, or aged under 18 years 6 months, **you will not be required to self-isolate**. If you have symptoms you should take a test and stay home until you get results. Practical support includes:

- **CityLife Line** If you are self-isolating and need support contact the Welfare and Wellbeing team. They offer advice and support on issues that might be making self-isolation more difficult, such as: food, money, work and more.
- **Food banks and free emergency food**
- **Free meals and cheap food**
- **Help with shopping and prescriptions**

Keep an eye on **Newcastle City Council corporate coronavirus pages** for latest local information and support.

Care homes and home care

- **Guidance on care home visiting** includes end of life and infection control
 - **Guidance on taking someone out of a care home** including risk assessment, someone has symptoms and a link to named visitors
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Vaccinations

Children aged 12 to 15 can get their jabs at walk in centres. Some schools are arranging vaccinations.

All adults over the age of 16 can now **book an appointment for a vaccination or turn up to a walk in vaccination clinic**.

You can **book a booster vaccine** 6 months and one week after your second dose. You may receive a text to remind you. If you are eligible, get your booster jab as soon as you can.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women can get vaccinated.

Keep an eye on **Newcastle City Council Twitter page** for latest pop up vaccination centres and clinics

Fully vaccinated means:

- People who have been vaccinated with a full course of one of the vaccines approved by the **MHRA for use in the UK** which has been administered in the UK;
- The vaccinations have been administered with at least 8 to 12 weeks between first and second dose and
- there were **14 days between the final dose and last contact** with the case.

Approved vaccines are:

- Oxford / Astra Zeneca
 - Pfizer
 - Moderna
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Holidays abroad and quarantine

Please keep an eye on the guidance for travel. Countries have moved in and out of the traffic light list and therefore quarantine and proof of vaccinations requirements change regularly. Please read [travel abroad from England during the coronavirus](#)

Covid Pass

You may be asked to show that you are vaccinated against or that you have tested negative for Covid-19 before you travel or attend an event. [This is known as a Covid Pass.](#)

You can access a Covid Pass online using the [NHS App.](#)

NHS Apps

[NHS Covid App](#) is used for track and trace, checking your symptoms and advice

[NHS App](#) is where you can get your digital NHS COVID Pass; order repeat prescriptions; search for, book and cancel appointments at your GP surgery, and see details of your upcoming and past appointments; register your organ donation decision

Domestic abuse and safeguarding

Extended periods of time at home have put people more at risk of domestic abuse. There is local support available if you are experiencing [domestic abuse](#)

At risk?

The Silent Police Solution: make yourself heard when calling 999 but unable to speak

1. **Listen** to the call handler's questions
2. **Cough or tap** the handset if possible
3. **Press 55** if prompted, to let them know your call is genuine. You will then be put through to the police

If calling from a landline the silent solution can't be used. They will try to ask you questions and get a response from you. If they can't decide whether your call is genuine, the call may be ended. However, the call may stay connected for 45 seconds. Pick up the handset again to let the police know your call is genuine. If the call handler is worried about your safety you will be connected to

your local police. Calling from a landline gives the call handler more information about your location.

[Read more on How to Make Yourself Heard if unable to speak or making a noise would put you or someone else in danger.](#)

Ask for ANI (Action Needed Immediately)

Ask for ANI (Action Needed Immediately) is a codeword scheme developed by the Home Office to provide a discreet way for victims of domestic abuse to signal that they need emergency help from the safety of their local pharmacy.

In the Northumbria force area, domestic abuse victims will be able to use the codeword ANI in Boots pharmacies to let staff know that they require an emergency police response, or help contacting a helpline or specialist support service. Other independent pharmacies are not yet participating in the project but we will let you know if this changes.

Help to plan your trip to Newcastle City Centre

[How Busy Is Toon ?](#) gives you information to help understand how busy the buses, roads and city centre is. So you feel safe and prepared when planning to visit Newcastle city centre. Visit the website to see:

- Street images of: Northumberland Street, Grey Street, Barrack Road and Blakett Street, updated every 5 minutes
 - Images of key roads into the city, updated every 15 minutes
 - A real-time map showing the location of every bus operating across Newcastle, searchable by route number
 - Car park spaces available
 - Up-to-date traffic and travel information
 - Information on Electric vehicle (EV) charging locations
 - Walking and cycling routes to help you plan your journey
 - Up-to-date coronavirus rules and safety guidance
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InformationNOW Articles

- [Scams, fraud and cybercrime during the coronavirus and beyond](#)
- [Stay connected online during the coronavirus](#)
- [Keeping in touch online](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Online events and activities](#)

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Useful Organisations

NHS Covid 19 App

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-covid-19/>

NHS 111

Website: www.nhs.uk/111

Citylife Line

Website: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/public-health-wellbeing-and-leisure/public-health-services/coronavirus-covid-19/citylife>

Telephone: 0800 170 7001

NHS App

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-app/>

Telephone: 0800 170 7001

Emergency Services – Fire, Police, Ambulance

Telephone: 999

How Busy is Toon ?

Website: <https://howbusyistoon.com/>

Telephone: 999

Related Articles

[Food banks and free emergency food in Newcastle](#)

[Free meals and cheap food in Newcastle](#)

[Help with clothing](#)

[Help with health costs](#)

[Help with shopping and prescriptions](#)