## Updated NHS COVID-19 symptoms lists

The NHS [COVID-19 symptoms in adults](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/main-symptoms/?utm_source=07%20April%202022%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) and [symptoms in children](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/?utm_source=07%20April%202022%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) have been updated.

Adults and children who have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, should follow the [UKHSA guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19#symptoms-of-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19?utm_source=07%20April%202022%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19). Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.

**Symptoms of respiratory infections, including COVID-19**

Respiratory infections can spread easily between people. It is important to be aware of symptoms so you can take action to reduce the risk of spreading your infection to other people.

The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections are very similar. It is not possible to tell if you have COVID-19, flu or another respiratory infection based on symptoms alone. Most people with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections will have a relatively mild illness, especially if they have been vaccinated.

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or you do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities, you are advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

* continuous cough
* high temperature, fever or chills
* loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
* shortness of breath
* unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
* muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
* not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
* headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
* sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
* diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

If you are feeling unwell with these symptoms you should get plenty of rest and drink water to keep hydrated. You can use medications such as paracetamol to help with your symptoms. Antibiotics are not recommended for viral respiratory infections because they will not relieve your symptoms or speed up your recovery.

In some cases, you might continue to have a cough or feel tired after your other symptoms have improved, but this does not mean that you are still infectious.

You can find information about these symptoms on the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/respiratory-tract-infection/).

If you are concerned about your symptoms, or they are worsening, seek medical advice by contacting NHS 111. In an emergency dial 999.

UKHSA has now published new guidance for the general population on [reducing the spread of respiratory infections, including COVID-19, in the workplace](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reducing-the-spread-of-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19-in-the-workplace?utm_source=07%20April%202022%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19). This came into effect on Friday 1 April, and is also relevant to education and childcare settings.

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 should follow the [UKHSA guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19#symptoms-of-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19?utm_source=07%20April%202022%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) about when they should stay at home.

As we learn to live safely with COVID-19, there are actions we can all take to help reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and passing it on to others. These actions will also help to reduce the spread of other respiratory infections. COVID-19 and other respiratory infections such as flu can spread easily and cause serious illness in some people.

Vaccinations are very effective at preventing serious illness from COVID-19, however even if you are vaccinated there is a chance you might catch COVID-19 or another respiratory infection and pass it on to other people.

Most people can no longer access free testing for COVID-19. This guidance is in 2 parts:

1. Actions you can take to protect other people if you are unwell with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and you have not taken a test for COVID-19.
2. Advice for people who have taken a COVID-19 test and have received a positive test result.

**What to do if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and have not taken a COVID-19 test**

**Try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people**

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities, try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until you no longer have a high temperature (if you had one) or until you no longer feel unwell.

It is particularly important to avoid close contact with anyone who you know is at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell if they are infected with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, especially those whose [immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness, despite vaccination](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk).

Try to work from home if you can. If you are unable to work from home, talk to your employer about options available to you.

If you have been asked to attend a medical or dental appointment in person, contact your healthcare provider and let them know about your symptoms.

You may wish to ask friends, family or neighbours to get food and other essentials for you.

**If you leave your home**

If you leave your home while you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, and you have a high temperature or feel unwell, avoid close contact with anyone who you know is at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell, especially [those whose immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness, despite vaccination](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk).

The following actions will reduce the chance of passing on your infection to others:

* wearing a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask
* avoiding crowded places such as public transport, large social gatherings, or anywhere that is enclosed or poorly ventilated
* taking any exercise outdoors in places where you will not have close contact with other people
* covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze; wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose and before you eat or handle food; avoid touching your face

**Reduce the spread of infection in your household**

While you are unwell there is a high risk of passing your infection to others in your household. These are [simple things you can do to help prevent the spread](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065735/AG232_Safe_at_home_infographic.pdf):

* try to keep your distance from people you live with
* in shared areas wear a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask, especially if you live with people whose [immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness, despite vaccination](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk)
* ventilate rooms you have been in by opening windows and leaving them open for at least 10 minutes after you have left the room
* wash your hands regularly and cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
* regularly clean frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles and remote controls, and shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms
* advise anyone that does need to come into your home that you have symptoms, so they can take precautions to protect themselves such as wearing a well-fitting face covering or a surgical face mask, keeping their distance if they can, and washing their hands regularly

[GermDefence](https://www.germdefence.org/) is a website that can help you identify simple ways to protect yourself and others in your household from COVID-19 and other viruses. People who use GermDefence are less likely to catch flu and other infections and are less likely to spread them at home.