COVID-19 symptoms and what to do

Symptoms of COVID-19

COVID-19 symptoms can include:

- a high temperature or shivering (chills) – a high temperature means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- shortness of breath
- feeling tired or exhausted
- an aching body
- a headache
- a sore throat
- a blocked or runny nose
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea
- feeling sick or being sick

The symptoms are very similar to symptoms of other illnesses, such as colds and flu.

What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19

Try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if you or your child have symptoms and either:

- have a high temperature
- do not feel well enough to go to work, school, childcare, or do your normal activities.

You can go back to your normal activities when you feel better or do not have a high temperature.

If your child has mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or mild cough, and they feel well enough, they can go to school or childcare.

If you are eligible for treatments for COVID-19, you should take a rapid lateral flow test as soon as you get symptoms.

What to do if you have tested positive

You are no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if you have symptoms.

But if you or your child have tested positive for COVID-19:

- try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day the test was taken if you or your child are under 18 years old – children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults
- try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days after the day you took your test if you are 18 years old or over
- avoid meeting people who are more likely to get seriously ill from viruses, such as people with a weakened immune system, for 10 days after the day you took your test.