

About COVID-19

The correct name for the virus is SARS-coronavirus-2 and the disease it causes is Coronavirus Disease 2019 ([COVID-19](#)). SARS means Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. Throughout the document this new (novel) disease will be referred to as COVID-19. COVID-19 is a new strain of a disease and until fairly recently, unknown.

We have compiled this information on [COVID-19](#) and [prostate cancer](#) to the best of our knowledge and understanding at the present time. As the situation is constantly changing and as more knowledge and information becomes available, we will try to keep you as up to date as possible.

The aim of this document is to provide general information and is not intended to replace medical advice. Prostate Scotland **cannot give individual advice or recommend which treatments might be suitable for an individual or recommend individual medical care or health professionals** – patients should always check with their urologist, oncologist, CNS or GP regarding treatments.

As the following is general information, guidance and procedures for each health board or health board areas may be slightly different. If you have been given specific advice from your urologist, oncologist, CNS or GP then you should always follow their advice.

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What is COVID-19?

[COVID-19](#) affects your lungs and airways. You may hear it referred to as 'novel' as it is a new strain of coronavirus. It can cause a cough, high fever, loss of taste or smell and can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems (this is the body's protection system that identifies and destroys diseases, bacteria, viruses etc), older people and those with long term conditions such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and chronic lung disease.

What are the symptoms?

Common symptoms include:

- High temperature or fever (temperature greater than 37.8°C). This means you feel hot to touch on your head, face, chest or back. You may also feel cold or shivery
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure on your chest

- A loss of, or a change in your sense of smell and taste called [anosmia](#)
- Some reports have suggested that patients may also have experienced gastrointestinal symptoms such as diarrhoea. This is still being looked into.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. Reports on this illness have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and sadly some people have died from this disease. For further information about the virus please see NHS Scotland's NHS Inform page [here](#).

If you think you may have symptoms then you can find out about booking a COVID-19 test [here](#)

You should book a test within the **first 5 days** of the symptoms appearing. If you have any questions or difficulties, can't access the test form online or need to help to fill in the form then you can get in touch with the coronavirus helpline (0800 028 2816)

Other useful guidance can be found here at [Ready Scotland](#).

Protecting yourself and your family

Below is a summary of the latest Scottish Government guidance issued, **7.10.20**.

Seeing friends and family

- You should not meet with anyone from another household inside your house or their house unless you are an [extended family](#)
- You can meet outside in a garden, park or outside space in groups of up to **6** people but only from **2** households
- Try to avoid meeting with lots of different households in any one day- (and if you are in the shielding category no more than 4 households in a day)
- Stay **2** metres apart, unless you are meeting with your extended household
- If meeting in your/ their garden then others can use your/their toilet indoors making sure to touch as few surfaces as possible, cleaning any surfaces touched and washing hands thoroughly
- Others can walk through your home or their home to reach your garden if there is no other way to reach your/their outdoor space
- You should avoid sharing food and drink – each household should bring and eat their own food
- Those at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus (including those who had been shielding, people over 70, people who are pregnant and people with an underlying medical condition) should strictly follow the physical distancing guidance

Going out for food

Applies to bars, cafes, restaurants and whether you are outside or inside.

- Up to **2** different households can meet for a meal or drink with no more than **6** (children under 12 don't count in the 6). Stay at least 1 metre away from others not in your household

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- Book a table if you know in advance that you are planning a meal out. You will be asked to give contact details. If you eat out regularly, it may be worth having these details written down and you can pass these over, remember to get your details back.
- If you are on holiday and are eating out every-day, try to limit the number of eating places you visit
- Once in the venue, wear a face covering at all times when not eating or drinking and stay seated at your table. If you need to go to the toilet, wear a face covering
- You will find that it is fully table service and staff will be wearing face coverings

There are to be new restrictions both locally and nationally on licensed premises, hotels and cafes, with all hospitality premises only open indoors from 6am to 6pm and licensed premises closed for two weeks from 9/ 10 in the central belt and elsewhere in Scotland open outdoors until 10pm. You can read more about restrictions in the central belt and nationally [here](#).

Travelling

- You can travel anywhere in Scotland unless there are local COVID-19 restrictions. You can find out more about travelling in Scotland [here](#)
- When using public transport, you must wear a face covering (although there some people who are excluded from this) and at the present time people are encouraged not to use public transport except where essential
- You should only take car/other vehicle journeys with those in your household or extended household. Check [here](#) for more advice on how to travel safely
- In the following health board areas **Ayrshire and Arran, Forth Valley, Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Lanarkshire and Lothian**, people are asked to keep the use of public transport to a minimum as an interim measure and this will be reviewed in 2 weeks' time. Some information on travel can be found [here](#).

Shops

- Face coverings are compulsory in all shops and shopping centres unless you fall into the [group](#) who are excluded from this
- Some shops are now to re-introduce the 2 metre rule and put one way systems in place
- This may mean there is a limit to the number of people being allowed into shops

Work

- Everyone who can, should work [from home](#)
- Check here to find out more about [safer workplaces](#) when workplaces and businesses are able to re-open and get back to running
- You can view the Scottish government workplace risk assessment tool [here](#) to help people consider their individual risk when returning to work

Test and Protect

To help stop the spread of the virus, the Scottish government have introduced a new public health system to disrupt or break the way that COVID-19 is spread. It's called [Test and Protect](#). The way it's designed to work, is to test, trace, self- isolate and

support people who have or have the virus or been in close contact with people who carry the virus.

Track and trace

This means:

- finding people in the population who have the virus, possibly those showing mild symptoms or carrying the virus but don't have symptoms. This is the [test part](#).
- finding (or tracing) then getting in touch with people who have been in close contact (being less than 2 metres away for more than 15minutes) with the person carrying the virus to let them know. This is the [trace part](#).
- Giving all those in close contact help and advice about [self-isolating](#) and getting a COVID-19 test themselves

Track and trace app for mobile phone

The app is part of the track and trace system and can be [downloaded](#) onto a mobile. It can be downloaded from apple app store or google play.

It's the practical and electronic way to help find who is carrying the virus and contact those people who have come into close contact with them.

The app does not hold personal information, know who you are, or know where you have been. It cannot identify you or track your movements.

Shielding

For those who were at high risk from the virus, shielding was introduced. As from **1.8.20**, shielding was paused and has **not** been re-introduced under the new restrictions on **7.10.20**. However, those who were previously shielding should be extra vigilant at this time as the virus is increasing in the community. They must continue to be watchful and stay alert to keep themselves safe and think about reducing the number of people they are in contact with.

A guide can be found on how you might do that can be found at www.mygov.scot/shielding

To find out much more about figures for number of people diagnosed with [COVID-19](#), number of tests done and importantly the number of people diagnosed with COVID-19 in your local area, then you can view the new Scottish Government dashboard [here](#).

Are there treatments available for COVID-19?

As this is such a new virus, there isn't a [treatment](#) specifically for COVID-19 and no cure for the infection as yet. People throughout the world are currently working on treatments and vaccines. Antibiotics cannot be used as they don't work against a virus.

At the moment, treatment focuses on managing and helping with the symptoms associated with the virus leaving your body to fight the infection on its own while the virus runs its course. Because 'treatment' at the moment focuses on using our own immune system to fight the infection, it is important that people who were previously shielding remain alert and closely follow the guidance listed previously

If you have symptoms what should you do?

You can check your symptoms [here](#) with the self-help guide.

If you develop symptoms you (and anyone in your household must [self-isolate](#) and book a [COVID-19 test](#).

Wearing of face coverings

[Face coverings](#) are to help prevent the spread of [COVID-19](#) as these protect people that we come into contact with. These have become compulsory in certain settings such as shops, pubs, restaurants, public transport and taxis, hairdressers, going for a flu jab or for a COVID-19 test. You can see a full list of places [here](#).

Wearing a face covering is completely different from the PPE (personal protective equipment) that frontline NHS staff have to wear.

Risks for people with cancer

Some treatments for cancer can affect how well the immune system works. In particular, this may be the case for those men having [chemotherapy](#) treatments for their [prostate cancer](#). Their immune system may be affected and not work so well during their treatment and for a number of weeks or months afterwards. Those having treatment(s) over a number of months may be at a greater risk of developing more severe complications if they contract [COVID-19](#) (or indeed colds, flu or tummy bugs) during their treatment. However, some men with prostate cancer, due to age i.e. those over 70 and those with additional conditions such as diabetes, heart disease maybe more at risk of severe symptoms if they catch [COVID-19](#). Closely following the guidance given above is of great importance.

Who should I contact if I become unwell or develop side-effects while on treatment for cancer?

If you have chest pain, significant bleeding or you need immediate medical attention call 999. If you have a temperature or shivering or flu-like symptoms while you are on treatment for cancer, or for any side-effects of drug treatment, call your local cancer treatment helpline, or the National Cancer Treatment Helpline on **0800 917 7711**. They will ask a series of questions and will give advice or arrange for you to have a medical review at your nearest hospital.

About this information

The information contained in this leaflet has been developed by Prostate Scotland.

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