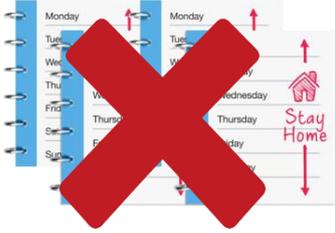
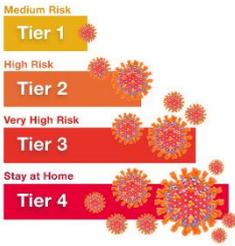




Guidance on protecting people most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus (COVID-19) (shielding)

December 2020

Who this guidance is for	
	This guidance is for all people most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus (COVID-19).
What this guidance is for	
	It is an update to replace the old guidance. This guidance started on 20 December.

	<p>On 5 November, people were asked to stay at home most of the time for 4 weeks.</p>
	<p>The 4 weeks staying at home time ended on 2 December.</p>
<h2 style="text-align: center;">What has changed</h2>	
   	<p>The number of people getting the virus is different in different areas of the country.</p> <p>Areas of England have 4 different levels of rules depending on how many people are catching the virus.</p> <p>The different levels of rules are called tiers.</p> <p>Tier 4 is an extra layer that was brought in on 20 November.</p>

	<p>The rules are for everyone but there are extra things people most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus can do to stay healthy and well.</p> <p>When people first started getting sick from coronavirus, some people were asked by their doctor to stay at home all the time. This was called 'shielding'.</p> <p>This guidance gives extra advice about things people living in all tiers can do to stay healthy and well.</p> <p>In the future, only people living in the very worst affected areas will be told to shield.</p> <p>For now, only people living in Tier 4 areas are being advised to shield.</p>
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What level of advice should you follow

	<p>If you are looking at this online you can find the area you live in by postcode and check what tier you are in by clicking here.</p>
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 <p>Tier 1</p>  <p>Tier 2</p>    	<p>If you must travel into an area in a different tier (for example to go to work or school), you should follow the guidance for whichever area is in the higher tier.</p> <p>For example, if you live in a Tier 1: Medium area but work in a Tier 2: High area, follow the work advice for Tier 2: High area.</p> <p>If you live in a Tier 2: High area but work in a Tier 1: Medium area, still follow the advice for Tier 2: High areas.</p>
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General advice for people living in all areas of England

  	<h3>Mixing with other people</h3> <p>Wash your hands with soap and water lots of times during the day.</p> <p>Do not spend too much time with people unless you live with them or they provide care for you.</p> <p>Do not sit or stand close to people who do not usually live in your house or care for you.</p>
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If the rules where you live allow you to meet people not from your household, meet them outdoors.

If you meet people indoors, open windows to let fresh air in.

It is a good idea to get exercise. You can exercise inside or outdoors.

Remember to stay away from people who do not live with or care for you.

The NHS Live well website has lots of ideas for how to keep fit and healthy.

If you are reading this online click [here](#).



Work

If you work, try to work from home.

If you need to spend money so you can work from home, you might be able to get help from Access to work. To find out more, click [here](#).

People most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus should not go to work if they live or work in an area where people have been advised to shield. This is just Tier 4 areas for now.

If you live or work in Tier 1, 2 and 3 and cannot work from home your boss must make sure your workplace is safe for you to go into.

If you are worried about health and safety at your workplace, tell your union, your council or the Health and Safety Executive.

To find out more, click [here](#).



If you are worried about your work, you can get advice from ACAS about your rights.

To find out more, phone the ACAS helpline on **0300 123 1100** or click [here](#).

If you cannot work from home and you cannot work in your workplace, talk to your boss about going on furlough.

This means you can stay at home and stop working. You will keep your job and the government will pay most of your wages.

The government will do this until 30 April 2021.

Travel

If you need to travel, walk, or cycle if you can.



Try not to travel on buses and trains. If you must, go at quiet times.



Stay away from other people as much as you can.



You must wear a face covering unless there is a particular reason why you cannot.



Travelling in a car could be safer, but try not to travel in a car with anyone who does not live with or care for you.



School

Doctors have said few children and young people are very poorly with coronavirus.



Schools have their own rules in place to make sure the virus does not spread.



If you are reading this online you can read the full schools guidance [here](#).

Children who live or go to school in Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 areas can still go to school unless their GP or hospital doctor has said not to.

Children who might get very poorly from coronavirus should not go to school in tier 4 areas.

Children of carers who might get very poorly from coronavirus should still go to school.

Shopping

If you go to shops, go at quieter times. You must wear a face covering unless there is a particular reason why you cannot.

Think about asking friends and family if they can go to the shops for you.



If you need help getting shopping or medicines, ring NHS Volunteer Responders on **0808 196 3646** (8am to 8pm).

If you are reading this on a computer, you can arrange help online by clicking [here](#).

Getting extra care and support

Whatever tier your area is in your doctors and care providers will still be there to support you if you need them.

You should still ask for help from the NHS. You can also do lots of things online like ordering prescriptions or talking to your doctor.

The NHS have a website called health at home. If you are reading this online find out more by clicking [here](#).

If you feel ill, ring **111** for **advice**. Ring **999** in an **emergency**.



People who support or care for you can still visit. They should not get close to you unless they need to.



Paid carers can find information about personal protective equipment by clicking [here](#). Unpaid carers can find information by clicking [here](#).



You can still get support from local charities and NHS Volunteer Responders. Call **0808 196 3646** between 8am and 8pm or if you are reading this online click [here](#).

Speak to your doctor or nurse to arrange transport support.

Mental Health



If you are feeling upset or worried, **Every Mind Matters** is a website with useful information – to find out more, click [here](#).



If you or someone you look after is struggling to cope with their mental health it is very important you ask for help straight away.

Extra rules and advice for people living in Tier 1: Medium areas

Tier 1



Lots of the guidance is the same as in the general advice section of this guide, but there are some extra rules you **must** follow.

If you meet people who do not live with you, or who are in your support bubble, you **must not** meet in a group of more than 6, indoors or outdoors.

If you can, you are advised to exercise outdoors.

The more you can stay away from other people the less chance you have of catching the virus.

Always stay 2 metres away from other people including in your home.

Extra rules and advice for people living in Tier 2: High areas

Tier 2

High



Lots of the guidance is the same as in the general advice section of this guide, but there are some extra rules you **must** follow.

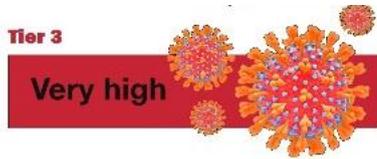
You must not meet with people indoors **anywhere** unless they are part of your household or support bubble.

You can see friends and family you do not live with outside, including in a garden or other outdoor space.

If you meet outside with friends and family that you do not live with, you must not meet in a group of more than 6. In England, this includes children and young people of any age.

It's a good idea to go outside for exercise but remember to stay a safe distance from others. The fewer people you meet, the less likely you are to catch the virus.

Extra rules and advice for people living in Tier 3: Very high areas



Lots of the guidance is the same as in the general advice section of this guide but there are some extra rules you **must** follow.

You can only meet friends and family who are not in your household or support bubble in certain outdoor spaces. You can find a list of these places in the [Tier 3: Very high guidance](#).

It is still a good idea to go outside for exercise even in Tier 3 but stay away from busy areas.

In Tier 3 areas lots of people might be passing on the virus so stay at home as much as possible.

Think about how you can stay apart from people even in your own home.

You should not travel out of the area you live in.

Extra rules and advice for people living in Tier 4: Stay at home areas



You must follow the rules that apply to everyone at Tier 4: Stay at home.

People who might get very poorly from coronavirus are also advised to follow the shielding guidance.



Shielding

Some adults and children have a health condition that means they are **most likely to get very poorly** and must go to hospital if they get coronavirus.

They might need to do more than other people to try to stop themselves getting coronavirus.

This is also known as 'shielding'.



For now, only those living in places that were put into Tier 4 on 20 December are being advised to shield.



If you are advised to shield you will be able to get extra support from your local council and chemists to help keep you safe.



Work

If you get a letter telling you to shield, **do not** go into your workplace.

Talk to your boss about working from home or going on furlough.

As you are being advised not to go into work, you might be able to get sick pay and other benefits. You can use the letter to show why you are claiming benefits.

Other people who live with you who won't get very poorly from coronavirus should still go into work if they can't work from home.



School

If your doctor has told you that you are still most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus, you should follow the shielding advice and not go to school.

Your school or college will make sure you can learn from home. Other children in your household can still go to school.



Mixing with others

Stay at home as much as possible and do not travel.

You can go outside, and you can still meet people who are in your support bubble but try to avoid busy places.

Try to keep 2 metres away from the other people you live with.

Shopping

Do shopping online or arrange for friends and family to collect your shopping and leave it outside your door.

They must not come into your home and you should not go outside to meet them.



NHS Volunteer Responders can also help pick up and deliver your shopping to you.

To arrange volunteer support, phone **0800 196 3646** (8am to 8pm), or to arrange online, click [here](#).

If you have problems getting food, your local council can help. If you are reading this online you can see what help you can get by clicking [here](#).

If you are asked to shield, you will get more information about extra support and how to get it in the letter.

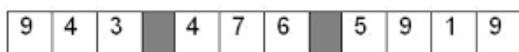
Medicines

Do not go to the pharmacy (chemist) to pick up medicines as lots of people have the virus in your area.

Ask friends, family, or volunteers to pick up your medicines for you.



This is your NHS Number



(This is an example number only)

If there is no-one who can help, you can arrange to have your medicines delivered for free.

Contact your pharmacy (chemist), tell them you have been advised to shield and need to have medicines delivered and they will arrange this.

Care and support

You can still get care and support at home from people in your support bubble and paid carers.

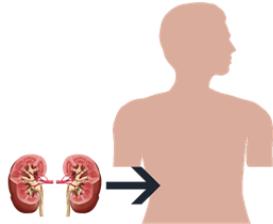
If you need extra help to follow this guidance and you have been advised to shield you can ask your local council for extra help.

If you are reading this online, you can register for support by clicking [here](#). You will need to make sure details like your address are up to date.

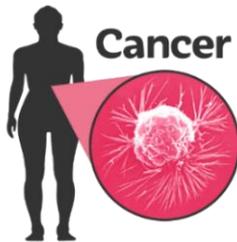
You will need your NHS number. You can find this on a prescription or on any letter the NHS has sent you.

Who is most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus

People who:



1. Have had transplants – like kidney or liver transplants.



2. Are having treatments for some cancers.

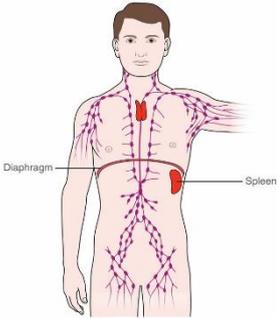


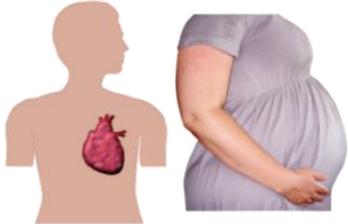
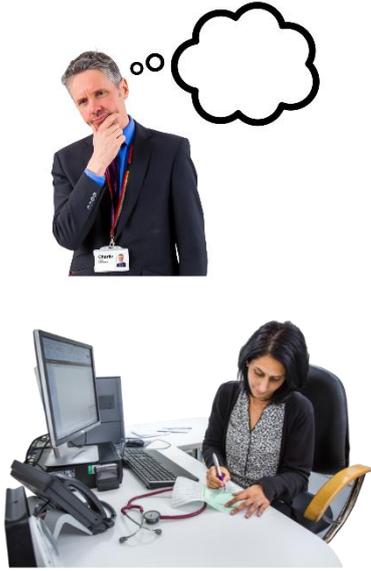
3. Have long-term lung disease.



4. Were born with rare diseases such as SCID that make the body, blood and cells work differently – which might mean they are more likely to get infections.

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	<p>5. Some adults who have Down's syndrome.</p>
	<p>6. Adults on dialysis or with long term kidney disease (stage 5).</p>
	<p>7. Are taking drugs that reduce the body's responses for fighting infections.</p>
	<p>8. Have problems with their spleen such as having their spleen removed which means their body can't fight germs in their blood.</p>

 An illustration showing a human silhouette on the left with a red heart highlighted inside its chest. To the right is a photograph of a pregnant woman in a grey dress, viewed from the side, with her hand resting on her belly.	<p>9. Are pregnant and have significant heart disease.</p>
 An illustration consisting of two parts. The top part shows a man in a dark suit and blue shirt, looking thoughtful with his hand to his chin and a thought bubble above his head. The bottom part shows a woman in a dark blazer sitting at a desk, writing in a notebook. On the desk are a computer monitor, keyboard, and stethoscope.	<p>10. Other people who have been put on the list based on how experts think coronavirus might affect them.</p> <p>GP's and hospital doctors have been given guidance about why these decisions were made.</p>

The pictures in this summary are from Photosymbols:
<https://www.photosymbols.com/> <https://www.nsu.govt.nz/pregnancy-newborn-screening/newborn-metabolic-screening-programme-heel-prick-test> and
<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/treatments-and-drugs/surgery-to-remove-the-spleen>