



## Guidance for COVID-19

# Advice sheet for people who live in the same accommodation as the patient

### Wash your hands frequently

Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially if you come in contact with the patient or with items handled by the patient.

### Limit contact with the patient as much as possible

Where possible, avoid touching them and their immediate environment.

### Ensure that shared spaces (kitchen, bathroom) are well ventilated

Keep windows opened as regularly as possible.

### Wear a facemask if advised to\*

If you have been provided with facemasks and advised to use them, then you should wear the mask when you are in the same room as the patient. Masks should not be touched or handled during use. If the mask gets wet or dirty with secretions such as saliva, it must be changed immediately. Discard the mask into the household waste/rubbish bin after use and perform hand hygiene after removal of the mask.

### Do not invite visitors into the home

Only those who live in your home should be allowed to stay. Do not invite or allow visitors (such as friends and extended family) to enter. If it is urgent to speak to someone who is not a member of your house, do this over the phone.

### Ensure that individuals at increased risk of severe disease avoid contact with the patient

Anyone who is at increased risk of severe disease should not care for the patient or come into close contact with them. This includes household members who have a chronic illness or who may have a weakened immune system due to treatment or medication, the very young (infants <1 year), those over 65 years and pregnant women. If contact cannot be avoided by those with an increased risk of severe disease, alternative accommodation should be considered.



\* if able or appropriate

### Avoid sharing household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with a person who is undergoing testing for novel coronavirus infection until they have been cleaned thoroughly.

### Toileting and bathing\*

If possible, the person undergoing testing for novel coronavirus should have their own dedicated toilet and bathroom.

If a separate bathroom is not available, consideration should be given to drawing up a bathroom rota for washing or bathing, with the isolated person using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bathroom themselves\*. Ensure the isolated person uses separate towels from other household members, both for drying themselves after bathing/showering and for hand hygiene purposes.

### Household cleaning

Clean all surfaces, paying particular attention to frequently touched surfaces such as counters, table-tops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets and toilet handles, bedside tables, phones, keyboards and tablets, every day with household cleaning products.

Follow the instructions on the label and check they can be used on the surface being cleaned. Use kitchen towel to remove any blood, visible body fluids and/or secretions such as saliva before cleaning surfaces.

If you do not have a suitable household cleaning product, you can use a bleach solution to clean surfaces. To make a bleach solution at home, add one tablespoon of household bleach to one litre of water to be used for cleaning.

If you have them, wear disposable gloves and ideally a plastic apron when cleaning surfaces, clothing or bedding. Wash your hands after removing gloves and aprons.

### Laundry

If you need to wash the laundry at home before the results are available, then wash all laundry at the highest temperature compatible for the fabric using laundry detergent. This should be above 60 degrees C. If possible tumble dry and iron using the highest setting compatible with the fabric.

Wear disposable gloves and a plastic apron when handling soiled materials if possible and clean all surfaces and the area around the washing machine.

Do not take laundry to a laundrette.

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling dirty laundry (remove gloves first if used).

### Waste

All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, and masks if used, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full.

The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. Do not dispose of it or put it out for collection until you know that patient does not have novel coronavirus.

Should the individual test positive, you will be instructed what to do with the waste.

\* if able or appropriate

**For more information,  
visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk)**

