

RIVERSIDE SURGERY



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Notification of shielding of clinically extremely vulnerable groups (January 2021)

Following the government's announcement on 4th January 2021 of the imminent lockdown, people who are defined as 'clinically extremely vulnerable' and are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus have been advised to shield. You will receive a shielding letter from NHS England shortly.

There are 2 ways you may be identified as clinically extremely vulnerable:

1. You have one or more of conditions listed below, or
2. Your clinician or GP has added you to the Shielded Patient List because, based on their clinical judgement, they deem to you be at higher risk of serious illness if you catch the virus.

If you do not fall into any of these categories, and have not been contacted to inform you that you are on the Shielded Patient List, follow the general [staying alert and safe](#) guidance for the rest of the population.

If you think there are good clinical reasons why you should be added to the Shielded Patient List, discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.

People with the following conditions are automatically deemed clinically extremely vulnerable:

- solid organ transplant recipients
- people with specific cancers:
 - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - people having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs

- people with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- people with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease)
- people on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- problems with your spleen, for example splenectomy (having your spleen removed)
- adults with Down's syndrome
- adults on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease (stage 5)
- women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired
- other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions.

Accessing care and support

You can access a range of NHS services from home, including ordering repeat prescriptions or contacting your health professional through an online consultation. To find out more visit www.nhs.uk/health-at-home, or download the NHS App.

If you have an urgent medical need, call NHS 111 or, for a medical emergency, dial 999. If you do need to receive care in person, you can. Your local NHS services are well prepared and will put in measures to keep you safe.

If you need to have a test for COVID-19 then you are able to attend a test site. You may want to think about attending at a quieter time or asking for a home test to be sent to you, in order to reduce your contacts with other people. It is important that you have your test. More information about getting a COVID-19 test can be found at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

It is also really important to look after your mental health. Go to the Every Mind Matters website for advice and practical steps that you can take to support your wellbeing and manage your mental health during this pandemic. If you or someone you care for is experiencing a mental health crisis, we urge you to make contact with a local health professional immediately.

Any carers or visitors who support you with your everyday needs or those of a child or young person in your care can continue to visit. They should follow social distancing guidance where close or personal contact is not required.

If you need any additional support to help you to follow this guidance, your local council may be able to help. You can contact your council and register for support at the Shielding Support website mentioned below.

You should also continue to access support from local charities and organisations, as well as NHS Volunteer Responders. As well as helping with shopping and medicines delivery, NHS Volunteer Responders can help with a regular, friendly phone call, and transport to and from medical appointments.

Call 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm to arrange support or visit NHS Volunteer Responders website.

Registering for Support

You will be able to use the online service to register yourself, or on behalf of someone else, to:

- request access to a priority supermarket delivery slot (if you have already got priority supermarket deliveries, you will keep them).
- tell your council if you need support in order to follow this guidance that you are unable to arrange yourself and cannot be provided by friends, family or other support networks
- make sure your details such as your address are up to date

This online service can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support> and is now live for you register for support. You'll be asked for your NHS number. It is helpful if you register even if you do not have any support needs at this time so we know to focus on caring for others who need it. You can log in and update your needs if circumstances change at any time.