

General Coronavirus Advice for People with Diabetes

If You Have Diabetes, You Are At Increased Risk Of Severe Illness From Coronavirus (Covid-19) And According To Current Government Guidance: You Should Be Particularly Stringent In Following [Social Distancing Measures](#), Including Significantly Limiting Face-To-Face Interaction With Friends And Family If Possible.

1. **Stay at home**
2. Work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to gov.uk employer guidance for more information.
3. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high **temperature and/or new and continuous cough**.
4. Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser.
5. Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
6. Stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people
7. Wash your hands as soon as you get home

8. You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.
9. It is important to keep active but you need to avoid going in groups and you are allowed to go out once a day to do this activity.
10. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media.
11. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP practice or other essential services.

SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of a:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS

- If you have coronavirus symptoms, however mild:
- Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. If you live alone, stay at home for 7 days from when your symptoms started.
- If you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and

not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

- Follow the advice of your GP practice, practice nurse or diabetes team regarding your medication.
- If you routinely [check your blood sugar](#) at home you'll probably need to do it more often.
- If you don't test your blood sugar levels at home, be aware of the [signs of a hyper \(hyperglycaemia\)](#) (high blood glucose level), which include passing more urine than normal (especially at night), being very thirsty, headaches, tiredness and lethargy. You should contact your GP practice if you have these symptoms.
- Stay hydrated - have plenty of unsweetened drinks and eat little and often.
- If you have [type 1 diabetes](#), check your blood sugar at least every four hours, including during the night, and check your [ketones](#) if your blood sugar level is high (generally 15mmol/l or more, or 13mmol/l if you use an [insulin pump](#), but your team may have given you different targets). If ketones are present, contact your diabetes team.
- **Remember to follow your [sick day rules](#).**
- Keep eating or drinking - if you are unwell and you can't keep food down, try snacks or drinks with carbohydrates in to give you energy. Try to sip sugary drinks (such as fruit juice or non-diet cola or lemonade) or suck on glucose tablets or sweets like

jelly beans. Letting fizzy drinks go flat may help keep them down. If you're vomiting, or not able to keep fluids down, get medical help as soon as possible.

If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the [NHS 111](#) online coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency, dial 999.

IF YOU HAVE HOSPITAL AND GP APPOINTMENTS DURING THIS PERIOD

DO NOT GO TO A GP SURGERY, PHARMACY OR HOSPITAL IF YOU HAVE CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS EVEN IF YOU HAVE AN APPOINTMENT.

For those who don't have symptoms and want to attend their appointments, the NHS advises everyone to access medical assistance remotely, wherever possible.

However, if you have a scheduled hospital or other medical appointment during this period, talk to your GP practice or clinician to ensure you continue to receive the care you need and consider whether appointments can be postponed.

MORRISTON DIABETES CENTRE APPOINTMENTS ONLY.

Please do not attend the hospital for your appointment unless you have been advised to attend the department specifically.

The Consultant will attempt to telephone you around your appointment time and they can discuss your care as a telephone

consultation, but due to other commitments with inpatients this may be difficult.

However due to COVID-19 and pressures of the service, this may not always be possible. If this is the case a further appointment will be sent to you. We ask that you be patient with us, these are unprecedented times. Normal services will resume once this crisis is over.

SINGLETON HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS ONLY.

All patients whose outpatient appointment has been cancelled - you should have had your previous clinic letters. Your results have been reviewed by a Senior Consultant and a plan produced for follow up by a Diabetes Specialist Nurse (DSN).

Your General Practice (GP or Practice Nurse) have been updated on these plans and arrangements have been made for patients to have blood tests (not urine) in the community from the middle of next week. The results of these will be reviewed by a Senior Consultant as they come through.

NEATH PORT TALBOT HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS ONLY

The Consultant will telephone you around your appointment time and they can discuss your care as a telephone consultation.

However due to COVID-19 and pressures of the service, this may have to temporarily cease as doctors will have to look after these patients. If this is the case a further appointment will be sent to you. Our diabetes specialist nurses are still currently available for advice. We ask that you be patient with us, these are

unprecedented times. Normal services will resume once this crisis is over.

IF YOU OR YOUR FAMILY NEED TO SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness or the illness in any household members is worsening. If it's not an emergency, go online to use [NHS 111](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. **If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that you or your relative have coronavirus symptoms.**

All routine medical and dental appointments should usually be cancelled whilst you and the family are staying at home. If you are concerned or have been asked to attend in person within the period you are home isolating, discuss this with your medical contact first (for example, your GP practice, local hospital or outpatient service), using the number they have provided. If your concerns are related to your coronavirus symptoms contact [NHS 111](#) online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.

Visit the gov.uk website for more information on [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#).

CORONAVIRUS AND YOUR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

You might be feeling worried and anxious about coronavirus and how it might affect you or your family and friends. We know this could be a stressful time, so you may need support with how you're feeling. We have some useful information to help you cope with [stress and other emotions](#), or you might like to call our [helpline](#) or use our [online forum](#) to talk to others.

If you miss your [annual diabetes review](#) where your 15 healthcare essentials are checked, you should be able to reschedule once normal service resumes. In the meantime, follow your current regime including [checking your feet daily](#), keep to a [healthy diet](#) and try to [keep active](#).

OTHER QUESTIONS

The NHS website says the symptoms and complications of coronavirus can be worse in people with diabetes. Would I be more likely to die?

Coronaviruses can cause more severe symptoms and complications in people with diabetes, as well as in older people, and those with other long term conditions such as cancer or chronic lung disease. The risk of death from coronavirus is quite low, and the majority of people with coronavirus will have a comparatively mild illness.

It is important that people with diabetes follow the [sick day rules](#) should they become ill from any illness. If you routinely [check your blood sugar](#) at home, you'll probably need to do it more often - at least every four hours, including during the night.

If your blood sugar is persistently high or low, or if you have [symptoms of a hyper](#) contact your GP practice or Diabetes team by phone who will help you if you have any queries or if you are unsure about what to do regarding your diabetes.

What if my supply of insulin or medications run out?

The insulin companies have assured us that they have plenty of supplies of insulin and medications and this applies to consumables

for insulin pumps; injection needles; blood glucose/ketone testing strips and lancets to prick your fingers to test your blood. Most pharmacies are providing 3 month supplies for patients to last through this period. So this may cause a slight delay but they are working very hard to be able to get your prescriptions ready for you.

Please do not contact the diabetes centre if you have an issue with the supply of your prescription. They will be extremely busy dealing with emergencies and in patients. You will need to contact your supplying pharmacist.

What should I do if my clinician is diagnosed with coronavirus?

If your clinician is diagnosed with coronavirus and you have not seen them recently, then you are unlikely to have been exposed to coronavirus. The risk associated with any healthcare workers who become infected with coronavirus is assessed on a case by case basis and appropriate action taken. You should follow the advice given to you if you are contacted because you have been exposed to coronavirus in this way.

Should I go to work / not see friends / not see friends who've travelled from affected areas?

We recommend that people with diabetes follow the latest [social distancing measures](#).

What if I have travel planned or a holiday booked to one of the affected areas – am I more at risk if I do travel?

The Foreign Office has the most up-to-date information. As of 17th March, they are advising British nationals against all but essential international travel. Any country or area may restrict travel without notice. Visit the gov.co.uk website for the [most up-to-date information](#).

FAMILY / FRIENDS / CARERS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DIABETES

I have been exposed to the virus and am a carer for someone with diabetes. What should I do?

We recommend everyone follows the [NHS advice](#) around reducing the risk of picking up infections including thoroughly washing your hands frequently, practicing good hygiene and avoiding contact with people who are unwell.

If you live with someone who has a continuous cough or a high temperature, you should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms. If you then develop symptoms, you should stay at home for 7 days from the day your symptoms start, even if it means you're at home for longer than 14 days.

If you have been in close contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, use the [NHS 111 online coronavirus service](#).

March 19, 2020 [COVID-19](#)

Further Information available.

Further information is available on this web page. As new information becomes available - these will be added on so keep checking this information page.

1. Type 1 diabetes - What to do when you are ill.
2. Type 2 diabetes - What to do when you are ill.
3. Self-Isolating when you have diabetes.
4. Worry about Coronavirus and Type 1 diabetes.
5. How to get to sleep during anxious times.
6. Unexplained hyperglycaemia in pregnancy for pump users
7. Hypoglycaemia avoidance in pregnancy for pump users
8. Sick day rules in pregnancy for pump users.

If you would like to learn more about how to manage your diabetes we have some online information for you:

- Coronavirus Precautions [Click Here](#)
- For people with type 2 diabetes you have access to 'MY DESMOND' on line self-management programme [Click here](#).