



Advice for people LIVING IN ACCOMMODATION with an individual who is undertaking self-isolation

A member of your household has been advised to self-isolate because they may have been in contact with COVID-19 (coronavirus). They have been advised that they do not need to be hospitalised.

Please follow this advice carefully

Wash your hands frequently

Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 45 seconds, especially if you come in contact with the patient or with items handled by the patient

Limit contact with individual that has been self-isolated as much as possible

Where possible, avoid touching them and their immediate environment.

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

Regularly open windows to allow adequate ventilation, remembering to close them to avoid getting rooms too cold.

Do not invite visitors into the home

Only those who live in your home should be allowed to enter or 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. People at increased risk of severe disease include:

- those with a chronic illness;
- those with a weakened immune system due to treatment or medication;
- very young (infants <1 year);
- those aged 65 years and over;
- pregnant women.

If contact cannot be avoided by those with an increased risk of severe disease, alternative accommodation should be considered.

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 COVID-19 (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. The isolated person should thoroughly clean the bathroom after they have used it (if able or appropriate). Ensure the isolated person uses separate towels from other household members, both for drying themselves after bathing or showering and for hand washing purposes.

Household cleaning

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

Use household cleaners designed to kill bacteria and viruses. 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 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 and disposing of gloves and aprons.

Laundry

If you need to wash the laundry at home before the results are available, then wash all laundry using laundry detergent at the highest temperature possible the fabric stated on the clothes label. If possible, this should be above 60°C. If possible tumble dry and iron using the highest setting compatible with the fabric.

If possible, wear disposable gloves and a plastic apron when handling soiled materials 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 and dispose of 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 rubbish bags or put them out for collection until you know that the patient does not have novel coronavirus.

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

If you develop symptoms, such as cough, shortness of breath or fever, after sharing accommodation with a person who has self-isolated, please contact NHS 111 or ring your GP for advice.

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www.publichealth.hscni.net
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