

November 2020



**If you are at very high risk of severe illness if you get coronavirus,
we are here to help you**



Islington Council and our partners are here to support you with:

- Understanding new guidance and options to keep you safe and well
- Access to food and medication
- Your money and benefits
- Advice if you are worried about paying your rent
- Keeping active
- Connecting and socialising



ISLINGTON



If you are struggling because of coronavirus, We Are Islington is here to help.

Contact us if you live in Islington and you need:

- access to essential supplies like food and medicine
- support to stay connected and active
- help and advice to stay safe and well
- advice and support with finances and benefits
- support if you are struggling to pay your rent

...or just for a friendly chat. You are not alone.

Call 020 7527 8222

Email weareislington@islington.gov.uk

We Are Islington is open every day, seven days a week, from 9am-5pm.

For British Sign Language (BSL), visit www.islington.gov.uk/signvideo Lines are open Monday - Friday from 9am to 5pm, Saturday from 9am to 1pm, Sunday closed.



A message about staying safe and looking after your health and wellbeing

from Jonathan O'Sullivan, our Acting Director of Public Health



If you were at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (clinically extremely vulnerable), the NHS or your GP wrote to you and the advice was to stay inside and protect yourself until 1 August 2020. This was called shielding. Thank you so much on behalf of our community for staying in – I know it was not easy.

Unfortunately, because new Covid-19 infections are rising, from 5 November to 2 December 2020, we have moved into a new period of national lockdown which includes new advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable. During this time, please stay at home as much as possible, this includes not travelling to work, school, pharmacies or the shops. However, it is also important to go outside for exercise, and to continue to attend hospital and GP appointments.

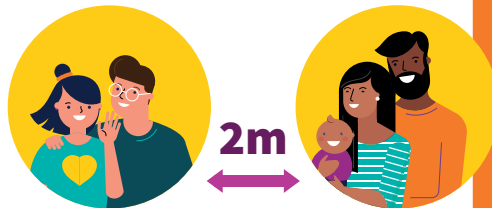
Updated government guidance can be found online at www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

We hope this leaflet will provide you with useful information about the government guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable, and the support available to help you during this difficult time. And if you are struggling with anything, I urge you to give our lovely **We Are Islington** team a call – they are here to support you to get out, to stay connected, and to access the advice and support you need.

National lockdown 5 November - 2 December 2020: Important public health advice for clinically extremely vulnerable people to stop the virus spreading

The basics

- **Stay at home as much as possible**
- **Do not travel to work, school, or the shops**
- **No mixing with people from outside your household or support bubble indoors or outdoors, in any setting**
- **You can meet up with one other person from outside your household or support bubble outdoors**
- **Maintain strict social distancing** – stay 2m apart from anyone not in your household or support bubble
- **Wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face**



Staying at home and going out

- You must not meet with people indoors in any setting unless they are part of your household or support bubble. Households can have one support bubble. A support bubble is where a household with one adult joins with another household to support one another. Households in that support bubble can still have close contact – visit each other at home and stay overnight. Once you make a support bubble you should not change who is in your bubble.
- People who live with you who are not clinically extremely vulnerable can continue to go out for essential reasons, such as to work, attend school, or go to the shops, as well as to exercise.

If you could do with some support to help you leave your home, please contact **We Are Islington** (see page 2).

- You can meet with one person from another household outside of your support bubble, this must take place outside and strict social distancing should be maintained.
- We encourage you to get outside with your household and/or support bubble as it is brilliant for your health and wellbeing. Get out for a walk around the block if you can, or visit one of Islington's parks or green spaces, which tend to be quieter between 9.30-11.30.

- You do not need to maintain social distancing within your household or support bubble.



Work and school

- You should work from home where possible. If you cannot work from home, you should not attend work during the national lockdown. If you cannot work from home and you are clinically extremely vulnerable, you may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit. Contact **We Are Islington** to find out if you are eligible for any benefits.
- People who live in the same household as someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow the guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people. They should instead continue to attend work and school in line with the national restrictions guidance for the general public.
- Speak to your GP or hospital doctor to understand whether your child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. If your child has been confirmed by a doctor that they are still clinically extremely vulnerable, they should not attend school while the new shielding measures are in place. The school will make appropriate arrangements for your child to continue their education at home.



Going to shops and pharmacies

- You are advised not to go to the shops or the pharmacy.
- Use online delivery slots for food shopping or ask friends and family to help deliver shopping or collect medicines for you.
- If you need help to book a delivery slot for food or support to access essentials like food and medication, please contact **We Are Islington** (see page 2).



Additional care and support

- We advise clinically extremely vulnerable people to avoid travel, except to go outside to exercise or attend essential GP or hospital appointments.
- You should continue to receive care at home, either from professional social care and medical professionals, or from friends and family within your support bubble.
- It is really important that you carry on getting support from the NHS for your existing health and other health needs. Some services can be accessed from home like getting repeat prescriptions or by a telephone consultation, as well face to face appointments. If anything is urgent please call NHS **111** or for a medical emergency call **999**.

Travel



If you develop coronavirus symptoms:

- You can organise a test at **nhs.uk/coronavirus** or by calling **119**. Anyone you live with must self-isolate for 14 days, or until you get a negative test result.
- If you are struggling to get a test, please keep trying. If you can't get tested, you must self-isolate for the full 10 days and everyone you live with must self-isolate for 14 days.
- If you are worried about your symptoms, call NHS **111** or if it's an emergency, call **999**.
- Self-isolating means staying at home and not going out. Don't go to work, don't go shopping, don't go outside your home for exercise. Self-isolating is important because it will prevent you from the risk of passing coronavirus on to other people and keep those around you safe.
- You might want to make a plan in case you need to self-isolate – for example identifying a family member, friend or neighbour who can help you access food or collect medication. You could sign up for an online shopping account or find a local store which will deliver to you.

If you develop:



a high temperature, or



a new, continuous cough, or



a loss or change to your taste or smell

...you must self-isolate and get tested to keep others safe.



It is so important to look after your health and wellbeing

Think about your wellbeing, and how you can stay connected – there are lots of activities and support in Islington for people of all ages, interests, and backgrounds which you can do at home or online. From meditation and relaxation classes through to online discussions and befriending groups for people from all walks of life, there is something for everyone – you are not alone. Please contact **We Are Islington** (on page 2) if you need a hand to find an activity you will enjoy. You can also find local health and wellbeing activities at **www.oneyouislington.org**



Feeling low, anxious or in crisis?

Many people have times when they struggle to cope and need a bit of extra help. If you are feeling sad, low or worried, there are lots of options for help: your GP will be able to help you find the right support, but there are also services you can contact directly:

- iCOPE, offers free, confidential help for problems such as stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia. They are also offering specific support for COVID-related distress or anxiety. Search for iCope online, email **iCope.Referrals@Candi.nhs.uk** or call **020 3317 7252**.
- If you need urgent support for mental health problems or are in crisis you can call the Camden and Islington Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust's crisis mental health team on **020 3317 6333**. This line is open 24/7. In an emergency, or if someone's life might be in danger you should call **999**.



Have you had your flu jab to stay well this winter ?

- The flu vaccination is safe and effective and must be given every year. If you were to catch flu and coronavirus at the same time it could make you seriously ill, especially if you have underlying health conditions.
- Because you are clinically extremely vulnerable, you are eligible and encouraged to get a free flu vaccination. People who live with you, including children, are also eligible for a free flu vaccination this year. It's important that any children you are in contact with have their flu vaccination if they are eligible, to reduce the risk of passing the flu on to you. The NHS should contact you, so look out for updates and book your vaccination as soon as they are available. The NHS is aiming to vaccinate all eligible patients by the end of November, so please contact your GP practice if you do not hear from them by then.
- We understand that you might be worried about visiting your GP practice for your flu vaccination. GP practices will be running their flu clinics differently this year due to coronavirus, which means that far fewer patients will be allowed into a practice at any one time and there will be other measures in place, such as clinicians wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), one-way systems and increased hand washing, to reduce possible coronavirus risk.



Please contact your GP practice or visit [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) for further information on this and how you can get vaccinated.

Do you need this information in another language or reading format such as Braille, large print, audio or Easy Read?
Please contact **020 7527 2000**.



Download the NHS COVID-19 app

The app will help to prevent the spread of coronavirus by helping to identify people who've been in close recent contact with someone who's tested positive for coronavirus. The app will send an alert straight to their mobile phone asking them to self-isolate. The app uses anonymised codes, and no personal data is shared by the app unless you give personal permission.

To find out more, go to covid19.nhs.uk

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for everything you're doing to keep Islington safe.

By following all of the recommended public health advice, we hope to be able to prevent the spread of the virus in our borough. When the period of national lockdown ends, it is likely that there will be new advice for those who are extremely clinically vulnerable. We will write to update you when this happens.

If you are struggling because of coronavirus, we urge you to get in touch with **We Are Islington**. You are not alone, and Islington Council and our partner organisations are here for support.

