

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Patient Information

# If you have a Positive Result

Covid-19 is a disease caused by a type of virus called a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are common across the world and often cause symptoms like those of the common cold. Most people will experience mild symptoms, but some people may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

Coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in older people, people with weakened immune systems due to underlying conditions or immune suppressant medications, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer or chronic lung disease.

**For more information on at risk groups: [digital.nhs.uk/coronavirus/shielded-patient-list](https://digital.nhs.uk/coronavirus/shielded-patient-list)**

### What happens if you are tested positive?

**You have recently been tested positive for Covid-19.** You may or may not experience one or more common signs and symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties and loss of smell/taste. You may be admitted into the hospital based on severity of your signs and symptoms or you will be asked to stay at home and self-isolate.

If you are tested positive following routine screening during a prolonged inpatient stay, an investigation will be carried out to identify the cause of transmission of Covid-19. We will do this with in line with Trust Policy.

#### Treatment:

As Covid-19 is a virus, there is no specific treatment. Numerous research studies and trials are ongoing to identify appropriate treatment. You will be monitored closely and treated based on your signs, symptoms and outcomes of investigations related to your clinical condition.

#### Caring for you:

Please don't be scared or alarmed, all staff will introduce themselves by name and be there to answer any questions you may have. You will be cared for on a Covid-19 ward and may be in a side room or a bay with other patients who have the Covid-19 virus. All health care professionals will be wearing masks, apron, gloves and sometimes a face visor.

#### Screening & Ward Moves:

You will be routinely screened during your inpatient stay in line with Trust Policy.

#### Bed Movement / Transfer:

You will be transferred to a Covid-19 wards where you will stay for minimum of 14 days. After this you will require a further Covid screen and may be moved to a non-Covid-19 ward. You may have to move on multiple occasions. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

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#### Visitors:

To keep you and all our patients and our staff safe, visiting remains restricted in all adult clinical areas, in order to prevent the transmission of Coronavirus. The Trust recognises how important it is to keep in touch with friends and relatives and has introduced a virtual visiting service so that relatives can make contact with patients via video call. **This can be arranged by contacting this number: 0161 716 8956 between the hours of 09:00 and 12:00 hours.** Visiting will be permitted in exceptional circumstances by appointment and will be arranged in advance with the Ward Manager/Matron. Please speak to the nurse in charge or the Ward Manager if you

have exceptional circumstances. Any visiting that is agreed in advance will include for one named visitor to visit at pre-arranged times with the Ward or Departmental manager. The visitor will be asked to comply with safety measures such as social distancing, hand washing and the wearing of a face mask.

We recognise that maintaining contact with friends and family is important and we will endeavour to support you during your admission for planned care. If you have any queries regarding your admission for planned care the Hospital team will share their contact details, please speak to a member of the Hospital team arranging your care.

#### Protect Yourself and Others:

- Maintain good hand hygiene: wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet, before meals and meal preparation, after coughing and sneezing.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, dispose of the tissue, and then wash your hands.
- Maintain social distancing based on current Government guidelines.
- Avoid close contact, when possible, with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

#### Discharge:

You will be discharged as soon as you are clinically stable. You may not be Covid-19 negative by this time and will have to complete your 10 day isolation period after going home.

### Recovery

After you have been ill, especially for a long time, it can take a while to feel well in yourself again. This information details some common problems that people may experience when they are discharged from hospital. However, everyone is different and you might find you do not experience any of these problems at all. If you do we have tried to offer some ways of dealing with them which we hope will be helpful to you and your family.

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### Physical Health

#### Why do I feel that I have no energy?

**Fatigue or tiredness** is the most common reported symptom following a Covid-19 infection. When you've been critically ill, you'll probably feel very tired and won't have much energy. Setting daily small goals can help you.

Some patients have described a 'fatigue wall' after performing exercise. Try not to be discouraged or give up if this happens. Try to recognise your body's limits after a serious illness and restart the next day.

Try breaking your activities into smaller tasks that are more manageable, for example: Brush teeth, rest, wash face, rest, comb hair, rest. Slow your activities down. It can be very frustrating to be unable to do things as quickly and easily as before, but remember that this will not last forever. Try not to push yourself too hard as this can end up making your recovery take longer.

#### Why do I feel breathless?

**Feeling breathless is another reported common symptom following COVID-19.**

You may feel breathless after even the smallest amount of effort such as moving around in bed or getting out of bed, walking, getting dressed, climbing stairs, or doing jobs around the house. Being breathless can make you panic or feel frightened. When you get breathless, try not to panic. Your breathing pattern will settle.

#### Why are my joints and muscles sore and stiff?

Some patients suffer from painful, stiff joints following a stay in the hospital. This is because your joints and muscles will be weak and unused to moving after such a long time in bed. Some patients require painkillers short term to help with joint and muscle pain, however the best cure is to keep moving. Your physiotherapy team will help you to practice movements to relieve pain and stiffness.

#### Why am I losing my hair?

You may notice changes to your hair and some of it may fall out. This is not unusual and can even happen months after you leave hospital. It usually grows back but it may be more curly, straight or thin, or a different colour from how it was before.

It is very important to stay hydrated, eat a healthy and balanced diet, get adequate rest and manage stress. Some patients find taking vitamin supplements beneficial following hair loss. Talk to your GP.

#### Hearing loss

There is early evidence that a significant number of patients report some hearing loss following Covid. Further research is being undertaken at present.

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### Emotional Health

#### Why do I feel low in mood?

Many people suffer from mood changes, such as irritability, tearfulness and lethargy. This is a normal reaction to being unwell. These feelings might come and go. It is important to accept that it will take time to recover physically and psychologically.

#### Why can't I sleep at night?

Whilst recovering from COVID-19 you may need regular sleep to keep your body healthy. It can take time to get back into a normal sleep routine. You may find it harder to fall asleep, or you may often wake during the night. If you have difficulty sleeping for over four weeks, contact your GP for more support.

#### Remember to look after your mental health

It is normal to feel worried about COVID-19. This is an uncertain time and you might be feeling bored, lonely, anxious, frustrated or low. It's important to remember that, for most people, these feelings will pass. Here are some things that you can do to look after your mental health:

- Stay connected with friends and family: for example, by phone or via the internet
- Talk about your worries
- Carry on doing things you enjoy
- Keep on getting support for your physical and mental health difficulties, if possible. Many healthcare providers offer phone or video appointments.
- Eat healthy meals and drink enough water
- Exercise regularly
- Try not to drink too much alcohol
- Try to maintain a regular sleeping pattern

### What if I continue to experience problems?

Please contact your GP if you have any particular worries or concerns to identify what support is available. If you have a follow up hospital appointment do let the healthcare professional know if you have worries or concerns