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Press release

COVID-19: government announces moving out of contain phase and into delay

The government has announced that we are moving out of the contain phase and into delay, in response to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

From:

[Department of Health and Social Care](#)

Published

12 March 2020



The government has announced that we are moving out of the contain phase and into delay, in response to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The UK Chief Medical Officers have now raised the risk to the UK from moderate to high.

As per the current advice, the most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves remains washing their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Make sure you cough or sneeze into a tissue, put it in a bin and wash your hands.

We are asking anyone who shows certain symptoms to self-isolate for 7 days, regardless of whether they have travelled to affected areas. This means we want people to stay at home and avoid all but essential contact with others for 7 days from the point of displaying mild symptoms, to slow the spread of infection.

The symptoms are:

- a high temperature (37.8 degrees and above)
- a new, continuous cough

You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

In the coming weeks, we will be introducing further social distancing measures for older and vulnerable people, asking them to self-isolate regardless of symptoms.

If we introduce this next stage too early, the measures will not protect us at the time of greatest risk but could have a huge social impact. We need to time this properly, continue to do the right thing at the right time, so we get the maximum effect for delaying the virus. We will clearly announce when we ask the public to move to this next stage.

Our decisions are based on careful modelling.

We will only introduce measures that are supported by clinical and scientific evidence.

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