

[Home](#) > [Rules and restrictions during COVID-19](#)

News story

Statement from the UK Chief Medical Officers on an update to coronavirus symptoms: 18 May 2020

New information about coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms has been announced.

From:

[Department of Health and Social Care \(/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care\)](#)

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From today, all individuals should self-isolate if they develop a new continuous cough or fever or anosmia.

Anosmia is the loss of or a change in your normal sense of smell. It can also affect your sense of taste as the two are closely linked.

We have been closely monitoring the emerging data and evidence on COVID-19 and, after thorough consideration, we are now confident enough to recommend this new measure.

The individual's households should also self-isolate for 14 days as per the current guidelines and the individual should stay at home for 7 days, or longer if they still have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell.

Chief Medical Officer for Wales, Dr Frank Atherton

Chief Medical Officer for Northern Ireland, Dr Michael McBride

Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, Dr Gregor Smith

Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Chris Whitty

Further information

Changes for the symptomatic individual and their household:

- individuals will need to self-isolate immediately if they develop a new continuous cough or fever or, as of today, a loss or changed sense of normal smell or taste (anosmia)
- all members of their household must also self-isolate according to current guidelines, unless the symptomatic individual receives a negative test result

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