

www.nhsinform.scot . **If you need urgent support with groceries you should phone your local assistance centre.** Their contact details are included with this letter and also available at www.gov.scot/publications/covid-shielding-contacts .

If you do not have a mobile phone, you will still be able to access support with daily living by calling your local assistance centre.

We know that this is a very worrying time, especially for patients with significant underlying illnesses. Your safety and the continued provision of the care and treatment you need is a priority for the Scottish Government and the NHS in Scotland. This letter gives you practical and detailed advice on how to protect yourself and access the care and treatment you need.

The safest course of action is for you to stay at home at all times and avoid all face-to-face contact for at least twelve weeks from today, except from carers and healthcare workers who you must see as part of your medical care.

We recognise this is difficult, and it may feel like a big step, but by doing this it will help to protect you from coming into contact with the virus, which could be very dangerous for you.

If you are in touch with friends, family or a support network in your community who can support you to get food and medicine, follow the advice in this letter. If you do not have contacts who can help support you, more advice is given at Section 5 in this letter.

Over the coming days, councils and health professionals will be working together to keep in contact with you to make sure you have access to food supplies and any medicines you need.

If, at any point, you think you have developed symptoms of coronavirus, such as a new, continuous cough and/or high temperature (above 37.8 °C), seek clinical advice by phoning the NHS on 111. **Do this as soon as you get symptoms.**

This is different to the advice that we are giving people who do not fall into the very high risk group, who are only being asked to contact the NHS if they feel very unwell. **We are asking you to get in touch sooner than we are advising everyone else.**

Patients in the 'highest risk' groups are all currently receiving this same letter. There is specific advice below for those patients reading this letter who know they have cancer. If you do not have cancer, please follow the advice in the rest of this letter (but not the paragraph which follows):

If you, or the person you care for, is currently within 6 weeks of having received chemotherapy or radiotherapy for a cancer (including a blood cancer), and feel unwell, whether or not you think it might be the coronavirus infection, then you should phone the emergency Scottish Cancer Treatment Helpline number I&S or the emergency number given to you by your consultant or specialist nurse. You should do this whether you think you have Covid-19 or are unwell in any other way, just as you would have done before this Covid-19 epidemic.

hands with soap and water for 20 seconds when they arrive, before and after preparing food and frequently during their visit.

It is also a good idea to speak to your carers about what happens if one of them becomes unwell. If you need help with care but you're not sure who to contact please visit <https://careinfoscotland.scot/topics/how-to-get-care-services>

2. Medicines that you routinely take

The government is helping pharmacies to deliver prescriptions, prioritising those who are not currently able to leave the house. Prescriptions will continue to cover the same length of time as usual. If you do not currently have your prescriptions collected or delivered, you can arrange this by:

- Asking someone who can pick up your prescription from the local pharmacy, and leave them at your door for you (this is the best option, if possible).
- Contacting your local assistance centre to ask them to help you find someone (who will have been ID checked) to deliver it to you.
- If you get medicines or equipment from your hospital care team, they will make arrangements to have them delivered to you.

3. Planned GP practice appointments

Wherever possible, we will provide care by phone, email or online. But if we decide you need to be seen in person, we will contact you to arrange a visit.

4. Planned hospital appointments

NHS Scotland has written to your hospital to ask them to review any ongoing care that you have with them. It is possible that some clinics and appointments will be cancelled or postponed. Your hospital or clinic will contact you by phone or letter if any changes need to be made to your care or treatment. Otherwise you should assume your care or treatment is taking place as planned. Please contact your hospital or clinic directly if you have any questions about a specific appointment or the care you usually get from hospital.

5. Support with daily living

The government will be offering support to help you self-isolate, including the delivery of food packs and medications. It would be helpful for us to have your mobile phone number, so that we can get in touch with you through an SMS service to offer you this support.

Once you have the second official letter, if you have a mobile phone, please text your CHI number (which will be included in the second official letter) to I&S. This will help us match your phone number to your other details in our system. **Do not include any other information in your text, as it is an automated service.** You will receive an automatic reply to confirm you are connected to the text message service.