



Those identified as being at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures includes those who are:

- Aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- Under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
- Chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- Chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- Chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- Diabetes
- Problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- A weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- Being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- Those who are pregnant

Note: there are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, NHS in England will directly contact you with advice the more stringent measures you should take in order to keep yourself and others safe.

People falling into this extremely vulnerable group include:

- Solid organ transplant recipients
- People with specific cancers:
 - People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
 - People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe COPD.
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell).
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
- Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Shielding is for your personal protection, it is your choice to decide whether to follow the measures we advise. Individuals who have been given a prognosis of less than 6 months to live, and some others in special circumstances, could decide not to undertake shielding. This will be a deeply personal decision. We advise calling your GP or specialist to discuss this.

Advice for pregnant healthcare workers before 28 weeks gestation:

- If you are in your first or second trimester (less than 28 weeks pregnant), with no underlying health conditions, you should practise social distancing but can continue to work in a patient-facing role, provided the necessary precautions are taken.
- You should avoid, where possible, caring for patients with suspected or confirmed coronavirus infection. If this is not possible, you should use personal protective equipment (PPE) and ensure a thorough risk assessment is undertaken.
- Some working environments, such as operating theatres, respiratory wards and intensive care/high dependency units, carry a higher risk for all pregnant women of exposure to the virus and all healthcare workers in these settings are recommended to use appropriate PPE.

Advice for pregnant healthcare workers after 28 weeks gestation, or with an underlying health condition:

- If you are in your third trimester (more than 28 weeks pregnant), or have an underlying health condition – such as heart or lung disease – you should avoid direct patient contact. You should work from home where possible, avoid contact with anyone with symptoms of coronavirus, and significantly reduce unnecessary social contact.
- We encourage employers to seek opportunities for pregnant healthcare workers in their third trimester to work flexibly in a different capacity, to avoid roles where they are working directly with patients.