

Updated advice for extremely vulnerable people on local COVID alert levels

Clinically extremely vulnerable people in England will receive new guidance to help them reduce their risk from coronavirus, tailored to where they live. People who are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (coronavirus). If you are in this group, you should follow the advice to help protect yourself at [each alert level](#) as set out in the guidance.

People in this group include those with conditions affecting the immune system, certain cancers, and organ transplant recipients among others (see the full list of health conditions at the end of this document). The list does not include dementia, but evidence shows that people with dementia are at high risk of getting the virus. If you or someone you know has dementia, following these new guidelines will therefore be helpful.

- Those considered most clinically vulnerable will receive updated guidance, tailored to their local area, in line with new local COVID alert levels
- New guidance will support them to take appropriate protective actions in their everyday lives, while retaining as much normality as possible

The clinically extremely vulnerable group is already helped by wider national protection measures in place that apply to everyone – for example, the [rule of six](#) and mandatory [face coverings](#).

The new advice will help this higher risk group better protect themselves from the virus, without needing to follow stricter 'shielding' guidance.

Those in very high-risk areas may still be advised to follow formal shielding procedures in the future, such as staying at home, not going to work or school and limiting social contact to those in their own household and [support](#)

[bubble](#). People in these areas will be updated if the decision is not to follow shielding advice.

The additional advice for the clinically extremely vulnerable might include:

- for local COVID alert level [medium \(tier 1\)](#): strictly observe social distancing, meet others outside where possible, limit unnecessary journeys on public transport and work from home where possible, but you can still go to work and children should still attend school. This is on top of restrictions for everyone to only meet in groups of up to 6 people
- for local COVID alert level [high \(tier 2\)](#): reduce the number of different people you meet outside, avoid travel except for essential journeys, work from home where possible and reduce the number of shopping trips made or go at quieter times of the day. You can still go to work if you cannot work from home because all workplaces should be COVID-secure, and children should still attend school. This is on top of restrictions for everyone to not meet other households indoors, unless part of a support bubble, and to only meet in groups of up to 6 people outdoors
- for local COVID alert level [very high \(tier 3\)](#): work from home, in general stay at home as much as possible, and avoid all but essential travel. you must not socialise with anybody you do not live with or have formed a support bubble with, in any indoor setting or in any private garden or at most outdoor hospitality venues and ticketed events. You should reduce shopping trips and use online delivery if possible or ask people in your household, support bubble or volunteers to collect food and medicines. People in these areas are encouraged to still go outside for exercise and can still go to school and to work if they cannot work from home. A small number of people may need additional support to follow the guidance at this alert level, and they are advised to contact their local authority if they need assistance

It is very important that clinically extremely vulnerable people continue to receive the care and support they need to help them stay safe and well. You should continue to seek help from the NHS for your existing health conditions. If you are told to go to hospital for a routine appointment, then the NHS has measures in place to make sure that it is safe for you to do so.

In addition to the rules you must follow at each alert level, you can take additional precautions.

Continue to

- maintain strict social distancing
- wash your hands regularly
- try to keep the number of social contact you have with anyone else low. The fewer social interactions you have, the lower your risk of catching COVID-19.

[See the updated guidance](#) for further information

Categories of health conditions that make someone clinically extremely vulnerable

Those with the following conditions fall into the clinically extremely vulnerable group:

- solid organ transplant recipients
- people with specific cancers:
 - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - 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 that 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 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

- people with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (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
- other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decision

For further information please refer to the government website

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>