

HOW NHS TEST AND TRACE SERVICE WORKS



1. Alert: you will be alerted by the NHS test and trace service if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus. The alert will usually come by text, email or phone call.

You should then log on to the NHS test and trace website, which is normally the easiest way for you and the service to communicate with each other – but, if not, a trained call handler will talk you through what you must do.

2. Isolate: you will be told to begin self-isolation for 14 days from your last contact with the person who has tested positive. It's really important to do this even if you don't feel unwell because, if you have been infected, you could become infectious to others at any point up to 14 days.

Your household doesn't need to self-isolate with you, if you do not have symptoms, but they must take extra care to follow the guidance on social distancing and handwashing and avoid contact with you at home.

3. Test if needed: if you develop symptoms of coronavirus, other members of your household must self-isolate immediately at home for 14 days and you must book a test at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or **call 119** if you have no internet access.

If your test is positive, you must continue to stay at home for at least 7 days and the NHS test and trace will get in touch to ask about your contacts since they must self-isolate.

If your test is negative, you must still complete your 14-day self-isolation period because the virus may not be detectable yet - this is crucial to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus.

PEOPLE WHO DEVELOP SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS

When to self-isolate

The medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate if you have coronavirus symptoms or live in the same household as somebody who does. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- High temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you have one or more of these symptoms, you must self-isolate straight away for 7 days – or longer if you still have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste.

If you live in the same household as someone with coronavirus symptoms, you must self-isolate straight away for 14 days.

How to order a test

Members of the public can order a test through the [NHS website](#).

If you are an essential worker or an employer, please visit:

- [Essential workers](#)
- [Employers](#)

If you don't have access to the internet, you can order a test by phoning **119**.

For further information visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works#the-nhs-coronavirus-app>