

Discharge Instructions

COVID-19

Assessment for COVID-19

You have recently been assessed for the possibility of having coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). As of today, you are well enough to manage your illness at home. Once you get home, you should rest, stay hydrated, and get plenty of sleep. You may continue to feel body aches, fatigue and/or loss of taste and smell for several days, which are common after a serious viral illness. If your symptoms worsen, telephone NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or 111. If your condition deteriorates further then call your doctor or seek immediate medical attention.

You **MUST** self-isolate (quarantine) at home until you can stop self-isolating after these three things have happened:

1. You have not had a fever/temperature symptoms consistently for at least 72 hours without taking paracetamol
- AND
2. Your respiratory symptoms are improving;
- AND
3. At least 7 days have passed since your illness started

When returning home, please follow the precautions below:

WHO (people to take into consideration)

- Self-isolate (quarantine) is mandatory, until you meet all 3 criteria stated above.
- Be especially cautious if there are elderly people or anyone with significant medical issues in your home as these groups may have more severe symptoms from this infection.

WHERE (guidelines for maintaining safe distances)

- Stay at home except to get medical care.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas; avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. If available, you should use a separate bathroom.
- You must stay in your home and minimize contact with others to avoid spreading the infection.

WHAT (objects/surfaces to take into consideration)

- Avoid sharing personal household items. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day. High-touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool or bodily fluids on them.
- Use a household cleaning spray or wipe to clean high-touch surfaces; follow the label instructions.

HOW (guidelines for hand washing and germ management)

- Clean your hands often. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. It is preferred that you use soap and water should if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in a bin. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

WHEN (guidelines for seeking medical care)

- Call your doctor if you start to feel worse (increased congestion, chest pain, coughing or fevers).
- Seek emergency medical treatment if you have difficulty breathing.
- Call ahead if possible and advise health care workers if you have symptoms of COVID-19
- Ask for a face mask as you enter the facility.

These steps will help the healthcare provider's office keep other people in the office or waiting room from being infected or exposed.

If possible, put on a face mask before emergency medical services arrive.

What should I tell my close contacts?

Household members, intimate partners, caregivers, and any person who has had close contact with you should monitor their health for symptoms of respiratory illness. They should call their healthcare provider if they develop symptoms that may be caused by COVID-19 including fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 999, let them know that you have COVID-19.

If available, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Managing breathlessness

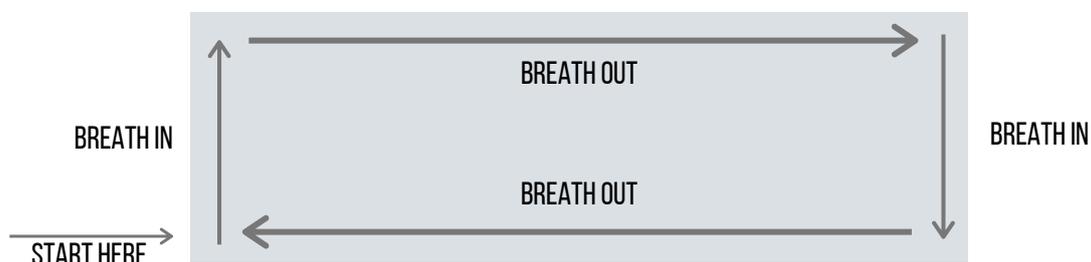
Breathlessness can be very unpleasant and frightening. Learning how to control your breathing can help to reduce feelings of breathlessness.

Breathing technique one - breathing control / relaxed slow tummy breathing

Breathing control is about breathing gently, using the least effort. If you have a tendency to breathe with small, fast breaths from the top of your chest you may find that using breathing control or relaxed slow tummy breathing helps to ease your breathlessness

How to do it

- Make yourself comfortable. You can do this sitting or lying down in a comfy arm chair or in bed.
- Make sure your shoulders, back and neck are well supported. Have your arms by your side or rest your hands on your lap.
- If you notice any sounds around you, try not to let them distract you.
- Breathe in gently through your nose if possible (as this warms, moistens and filters out dust)
- Breathe out gently either through your nose or mouth, whichever is most comfortable
- The focus is on gently breathing air out.
- With each breath out try to let go of any tension in your body
- Your breathing should be smooth and effortless and at a speed that is comfortable for you with the focus on the breath out.
- When practising relaxed tummy breathing some people find the image of a rectangle helpful
- Wherever you are, there is often a rectangle to be seen, whether this is a book, a TV, computer or tablet screen, a door, window or even a picture on the wall.
- Follow the sides of the rectangle with your eyes as you tummy breathe.
- Gradually slow the speed of which your eyes move around the edge of the shape to slow your breathing.



When to do it

- You can use it when you are feeling breathless or after exertion
- You can also use it when you are feeling anxious

Breathing technique two - pursed lip breathing

Pursed lip breathing is another technique that may help you to regain control of your breathlessness. Pursed lip breathing can be used at any time to help control your breathing. It is particularly useful whilst you are doing an activity that makes you feel breathless. It can also help you to recover your breath after the activity.

How to do it

- Breathe in gently through your nose
- Breathe out gently through pursed lips as if you are going to whistle
- The focus is on blowing air out gently for as long as feels comfortable - don't force the air out
- It is important to breathe at a speed which is comfortable for you

Positioning

Pursed lip breathing followed by breathing control or relaxed tummy breathing in any of the following positions can also help to reduce breathlessness.

- If you are feeling breathless or get breathless performing an activity, stop your activity.
- These positions will allow you to use your breathing muscles more effectively.
- You can use pursed lip breathing to help you recover your breath followed by breathing control or relaxed tummy breathing.
- Try the positions and see which one helps you



Discharge instructions

Managing breathlessness

Pacing techniques

- Pacing means setting the pace at which you perform an activity.
- Feelings of breathlessness can be reduced by slowing down the pace of an activity and breathing in time with that activity.
- Learning to slow down enables you to increase your activity levels or exercise eg. getting dressed, walking or climbing stairs
- Make sure you avoid holding your breath when carrying out an activity as this increases breathlessness
- Use your pursed lip breathing technique throughout the activity

Relaxation

Relaxation techniques can help reduce feelings of anxiety and ease breathlessness. The following relaxation exercises can help:

- **Body scan:** Try and get as comfortable as you can. Let the chair or bed support you as much as possible. Relax your arms and hands comfortably where they are and close your eyes if you want to. Scan your body slowly from the top of your head, down through your arms, spine, legs and down to your toes. Trying to release any tension in your muscles - let each muscle soften and slacken. You can then go on to visualise a relaxing scene.
- **Visualise a relaxing scene** such as a favourite place, a walk, a garden, the beach or somewhere from your imagination that makes you feel happy and secure. Think about being Calm, Relaxed and Comfortable. Imagine what you can see, hear, feel, smell – and enjoy this feeling for a few moments. When ready, gradually become aware of your surroundings and open your eyes and notice how peaceful and relaxed you are feeling.
- **Let go of thoughts.** Imagine you are sitting on a riverbank watching leaves drifting. When a thought or feeling comes into your mind, try to see this as a leaf and let it drift away from you and disappear
- You might find it also helps listen to music or an audiobook or relaxation Apps available on your phone