

The 3 Categories that the NHS divides everyone into and what each category should do

- 1. Extremely Vulnerable and Shielding**
- 2. Vulnerable person - Stringent social distancing**
- 3. Everyone else: Social distancing**

1. Extremely Vulnerable and Shielding

People falling into this extremely vulnerable group include:

1. Solid organ transplant recipients.
2. 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 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
3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe COPD.
4. People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell).
5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Shielding is a measure to protect people who are clinically extremely vulnerable by minimising all interaction between those who are extremely vulnerable and others. We are strongly advising people with serious underlying health conditions (listed below), which put them at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19), to rigorously follow shielding measures in order to keep themselves safe.

You are strongly advised to stay at home at all times for a period of at least 12 weeks from the day you receive your letter. Avoid going out for food and medicine. Ask a friend, neighbour or family member to bring your supplies where possible.

2. Vulnerable person - Stringent social distancing

70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system

This group 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

NB The Government recognise that people may be “vulnerable for wider reasons including frailty, disability, pregnancy or social vulnerability.”

3. Everyone else: Social distancing

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are to:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport when possible
3. Work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to [employer guidance](#) for more information
4. Avoid large and small gatherings in public spaces, noting that pubs, restaurants, leisure centres and similar venues are currently shut as infections spread easily in closed spaces where people gather together.
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media
6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

Everyone should be trying to follow these measures as much as is practicable.

We strongly advise you to follow the above measures as much as you can and to significantly limit your face-to-face interaction with friends and family if possible, particularly if you:

- are over 70
- have an underlying health condition
- are pregnant

This advice is likely to be in place for some weeks.

[This summary is taken from UK Government Guidance]