

We know that people over 60 can be badly affected by the virus. It can make you very poorly, need hospital care and even cause death. This is, of course, very worrying. It also has implications for our NHS. It leads to pressure on our services and creates a rising demand for intensive care beds. We need to act now, to prevent this situation becoming any worse.

How can you help? How can you protect yourself and others? Please follow national restrictions during the lockdown period and then any new guidance from 2nd December. You should also keep your distance, wash your hands regularly and wear face coverings where needed. These measures are our **best defence against the virus**. We know it can be hard, keeping a distance from others, avoiding travelling to places, not meeting up with friends or family. But the virus spreads when we mix and have contact and don't stay apart. Stay local, don't visit areas with higher levels of restrictions. If we can stay local, stop visiting areas with greater numbers of infections, we can protect ourselves and others.

Please ensure you self-isolate as soon as you have a symptom of Covid-19. The symptoms to look out for are;

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a 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)
- **a 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 any of these, no matter how mild your symptoms, please self-isolate immediately and book a test. You can do this online <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

With a second national lockdown in place, the County Council's Here2Help service is on hand to help residents who require extra support.

A phone number has been set up to help fill out the form for those who can't access the internet. The dedicated number is: 01905 768053 and is open Monday - Thursday 9:00 - 5:00pm and Friday 9:00 - 4:30pm.

Guidance for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable has been updated to include additional measures to keep this group safe during lockdown. This information is available on the Here2Help shielding advice page on the county council's website. The Government is encouraging people in this group to register for support on the national website where they, for example, can get access to priority supermarket deliveries.

For more information, please visit: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help