

Clinically Vulnerable Groups - A Guide

This guidance is from the UK government for people including children who are clinically extremely vulnerable. It's also for their family, friends and carers.

People who are clinically extremely vulnerable are at high risk of serious illness from Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They should have received a letter advising them to shield or have been told by their GP or hospital clinician.

This includes clinically extremely vulnerable people living in long-term care facilities for the elderly or people with special needs. If you have been told that you're clinically extremely vulnerable, you should:

- follow the advice in this guidance
- [register online](#) or call 0800 028 8327 to get additional support if you need it.

This guidance is still advisory. You will not be fined or sanctioned if you prefer to follow the [guidance on staying alert and safe \(social distancing\)](#). You may also choose to remain in your own home currently if you do not feel comfortable with any form of contact with others. However, careful time outside in the fresh air is likely to make you feel better.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Groups - A Guide

Expert doctors in England have identified specific medical conditions that, based on what we know about the virus so far, place some people at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Disease severity, medical history or treatment levels will also affect who is in this group.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people may 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 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
 4. People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (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.
 7. Other people 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 decisions.

For more information about who has been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, please visit the [NHS Digital website](#).

If you're still concerned, you should discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.

Check this is the right guidance for you

You are not clinically extremely vulnerable if:

- you do not have any of the conditions listed above
- you have not been told by your GP or specialist that you are clinically extremely vulnerable or received a letter saying you are clinically extremely vulnerable.

If you are not clinically extremely vulnerable you should follow the [guidance on staying alert and safe \(social distancing\)](#).

Staying at Home and Shielding

People classed as clinically extremely vulnerable are advised to take additional action to prevent themselves from coming into contact with the coronavirus (COVID-19). If you're clinically extremely vulnerable, you're strongly advised to stay at home as much as possible and keep visits outside to a minimum (for instance once per day).

This is called 'shielding' and the current advice is:

1. If you wish to spend time outdoors (though not in other buildings, households, or enclosed spaces) you should take extra care to minimise contact with others by keeping 2 metres apart.

2. If you choose to spend time outdoors, this can be with members of your own household or you may choose to spend time outdoors with one person from another household (ideally the same person each time).
3. You should stay alert when leaving home: washing your hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitiser, maintaining social distance and avoiding gatherings of any size.
4. You should not attend any gatherings, including gatherings of friends and families in private spaces, for example, parties, weddings and religious services.
5. You should strictly avoid contact with anyone who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, sense of taste or smell).
6. Although single adult households can form a 'support bubble' with one other household, people who are clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to be part of a support bubble.

The government is currently advising people to shield until 31 July 2020, but gradually easing protection advice in the interim period, and is regularly monitoring this position.