

How can we limit the spread of COVID-19?

Practice good hand hygiene

Wash your hands frequently and properly. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (about time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice):

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick
- After changing nappies or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching refuse/rubbish

It may also be worth considering additional hand hygiene if you have been on public transport or in a public place. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. Hand dryers do not kill the virus. If you manage a public space, consider whether you can provide hand washing facilities (or hand sanitizer), tissues and bins for your visitors.

Catch It, Bin It, Kill It

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and dispose of the tissue in a closed bin immediately.
- If no tissue is available, cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If you have touched a contaminated surface and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands, you could transfer the virus to yourself.

Maintain social distancing

Maintain at least one metre (three feet) distance between yourself and other people, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing or have a fever.

Stay home if you are sick

Do not bring illness into the workplace. If you have travelled to an area where the virus has been reported, or if you have been in close contact with someone with who has travelled from China and has respiratory symptoms, refer to government advice.

A note on facemasks

There is some debate about the utility of facemasks. Public Health England state that there is very little evidence of a widespread benefit in members of the public wearing masks. Face masks must be worn correctly, changed frequently, removed properly, disposed of safely and used in combination with good universal hygiene behaviour in order for them to be effective. If they are not worn properly and are loose fitting it means that bacteria can easily access the nose and mouth. Experts have also warned coronavirus could enter the body through the eyes.

Keep it clean!

Viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to eight hours. Sanitise objects such as keyboards and door handles frequently. This advice is also good advice for limiting the spread of other viruses such as the flu.