

COVID-19 - Pandemic Update

The whole country is re-entering a 4 week lock down from November 5th to December 2nd. Further guidance on the lockdown can be found on the government website, please ensure you read this and follow the new restrictions to help prevent the spread of the virus:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>

For the Practice we will not make any further changes as measures are already in place to help protect patients and staff. We will continue to do what we can remotely but if we do need to see you then you are able to attend for appointments. Please wear a mask, unless you are exempt. You will also be screened for COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival, via the intercom system.

The Practice has set out the waiting area within social distancing guidelines, regular cleaning takes place throughout the day and we are staggering appointments to reduce the number of patients in the waiting areas.

Please remember to keep your distance, wear a mask and wash your hands regularly/use hand sanitiser.

If you, or a member of your household develop symptoms then remember to follow the self-isolation and testing guidance. You should also follow advice if you are contacted through Track and Trace, or by someone you have had recent close contact with who has tested positive for COVID-19.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>



The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you must stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19.

Local Data – although the numbers of COVID-19 positive people increases nationwide, our local area remains relatively low and the number of deaths is at just over 1% across Devon, Torbay and Plymouth. However, we need to do all we can to help prevent the spread of the virus and reduce pressures on both GP Practices and hospitals.

Devon	Torbay	Plymouth
694 cases in the last week.	214 cases in the last week.	387 cases in the last week.
6 deaths in the latest weekly data.	9 deaths in the latest weekly data.	1 deaths in the latest weekly data.
88 small area (MSOA) with a count of 3 or more cases in the last 7 days.	17 small area (MSOA) with a count of 3 or more cases in the last 7 days.	32 small areas (MSOA) with a count of 3 or more cases in the last 7 days.

Pandemic Update... continued from front page

Extremely Vulnerable Patients (shielding list)

You will receive a letter from the Government, Department of Health and Social Care advising you what to do during this lockdown if you fall within this group. You do not need to call us to ask for advice, please follow the advice in the letter and any information issued by the government. If you think you have received a letter in error and should no longer be on the shielding list then please use eConsult to let us know, this will be reviewed by the Patient Services Team and flagged to a GP if needed. If you have not received a letter in the next few days and think you should have received one then again please send us an eConsult to let us know and we will look into it. Please only call us about Shielding if you cannot submit your query digitally. Thank you.

Flu Vaccinations

If you are eligible for a flu vaccination and have not already had one then please contact as soon as possible to make an appointment, before we run out of vaccines.

Eligibility:

- are 65 and over (including those who'll be 65 by 31 March 2021)
 - have certain health conditions
 - are pregnant
- are in a long-stay residential care
- receive a carer's allowance, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick
- live with someone who's at high risk from coronavirus (on the NHS shielded patient list)
- frontline health or social care workers

If you would like more information on the flu vaccine please use the link below
<http://bit.ly/CFSFlu>

If you are between 50 and 64 and do not meet the eligibility criteria above, there should hopefully be a vaccine available soon. When the Practice has these vaccines in stock and are advised by NHS England to initiate this programme we will inform patients.



The flu virus kills thousands every year.
The flu vaccine is the best protection
for you and those around you.

JUST GET YOUR FREE FLU JAB
Ask your pharmacist or GP if you're eligible.



Self-care this Winter

Cold weather can affect people in a number of different ways, especially for people aged 65 or older. It weakens the immune system, increases blood pressure, thickens the blood and lowers body temperature. This increases the risks of high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes, and chest infections.

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

- if you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18C
- keep your bedroom at 18C all night if you can – and keep bedroom window closed
- if you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18C, as long as you're comfortable
- use a hot water bottle or electric blanket to keep warm in bed – but do not use both at the same time
- have at least 1 hot meal a day – eating regularly helps keep you warm
 - have hot drinks regularly
- to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), babies should sleep in rooms heated to between 16C and 20C
- draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts
- get your heating system checked regularly by a qualified professional

Remember to keep your window closed on winter nights as breathing in cold air can be bad for your health as it increases the risk of chest infections. It's worth taking a look at Public Health England's website for advice and information on how to keep your home warm.

<http://bit.ly/CFSStayWell>



Public Health
England

Keep Warm Keep Well

Coping with cold weather and COVID-19

Keep Warm



Heat your home to at least
18°C



Ensure you have adequate food,
medication and warm clothes



Check if you are eligible for
help to keep your home warm

Keep Well



Stay as active as you can,
any exercise can bring
health benefits



Make sure you get your
flu vaccine



Follow COVID-19 guidance

Keep Connected Safely



Get help if you need it.
Speak to your GP, pharmacist,
carer or key worker for advice



Keep in touch with
friends, family and your
community



Look out for others.
Ask how they are keeping
warm during cold weather

Further Information



[Simple Energy Advice](#) provides
free advice on energy efficiency
and National grants to help with
energy bills: 0800 444202



Plan ahead.
Stay up to date
with the weather
forecast



If you're worried about
your health, visit the
[NHS Website](#), call **NHS
111** or in an emergency
call 999

Self-care this Winter

Help with heating costs

You may be able to claim financial and practical help with heating your home. Grants available include the Winter Fuel Payment and the Cold Weather Payment.

For more information on how to reduce your bills and make your home more energy efficient, go to the government's Simple Energy Advice website, or call the Simple Energy Advice helpline on 0800 444 202.

You can also find out about heating and housing benefits on GOV.UK. It's worth claiming all the benefits you're entitled to as soon as winter begins.

Look in on vulnerable neighbours and relatives

Check on older neighbours and relatives, and those with heart or breathing (respiratory) problems, to make sure they:

- are safe and well
- are warm enough, especially at night
- have stocks of food and medicines so they do not need to go out during very cold weather

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your local council or call the Age UK helpline on 0800 678 1602 (8am to 7pm every day).

Have a flu vaccination

Get advice if you feel unwell

If you are 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, it's important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell. The sooner you get advice, the sooner you are likely to get better.

You can get help and advice from:

- a pharmacy – pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor
- your GP – you may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to
- NHS 111 – go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do

Take Care of your Mental Health

Shorter days, colder weather and lockdown can all make life more challenging for lots of people. Find ways to stay active, eat healthily and be social even if it is just via a phone call or digital video chat. Digital Devon can help you learn to use online healthcare systems with free courses and advice, including general online advice as well. <https://www.digitalhealthdevon.co.uk/>



Devon Partnership
NHS Trust

Depression and Anxiety Service.

Self referral
call 01626 203500
or complete the online form; bit.ly/d-a-s



samaritans.org
Call us - 116 123
jo@samaritans.org

10 good tips for mental health;

1. Get plenty of sleep 
2. Eat well and keep yourself hydrated 
3. Avoid alcohol, smoking and drugs 
4. Get plenty of sunlight 
5. Take a break 
6. Keep active in body and mind 
7. Do something you enjoy 
8. Connect with others and be sociable 
9. Do things for others 
10. Talk about your feelings and ask 