

COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS: HELPING OURSELVES TO HELP OTHERS

We know this is trying times at the moment so we hope the information below will guide you through.

If you do require any support or know of anyone who needs support during this time, please so contact us on - 02072631067

Question 1

1) I FEEL WELL - WHAT SHOULD I DO?

[Note: This advice is for protection against viruses (including Coronavirus) that are not airborne but are believed to spread by droplets **when someone coughs or sneezes**. They can remain for some hours/days on hard surfaces or body parts and are transmitted **when we touch contaminated surfaces then touch our eyes, nose or mouth, or consume food or drink.**]

Answer:

- **Live normally** whilst taking steps to reduce your risk of Coronavirus.
- **Wash your hands in hot water and soap regularly** during the day. Work up a good lather for 20 seconds (timed by singing 'Happy Birthday' twice over as you do so! *See separate poster in your Help Pack*)
- When away from home, **carry a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitiser gel and rub this on your hands regularly** until you can wash properly. **Use before eating/drinking**, and especially after using **public transport and shopping trolleys. Avoid touching your face with unclean hands.**
- Carry a good supply of **tissues** with you when you go out. Don't use cloth hankies that need a hot wash to disinfect them.
- **Use alcohol wipes to cleanse your mobile `phone, tablet, laptop etc., also equipment you use in public places like libraries.**
- Observe people around you and keep at least **6 feet from anyone you notice coughing or sneezing**. Generally, avoid being close to people. (The government advises postponing that world cruise if you're 70+, and if you are working, **try to work from home**).
- If you cough or sneeze, **catch it** in a tissue, (or if you don't have one, in the crook of your arm), **bin it to kill it! WASH YOUR HANDS ASAP.**
- Be aware that **infection risks are high in small gatherings** and

where people are close together (queues, cafes, public transport).

- **Avoid social kissing and shaking hands.**
- **Ensure you are equipped** with **basic items** against the possibility you may need to "self-isolate" at home, be quarantined, or become infected and are confined at home for treatment. (Suggestions on [page 4](#)).
- **Keep yourself informed and updated:** the situation (and official advice) is constantly changing. Listen to TV news and radio bulletins, or if you have electronic access, go to official, trusted websites (*e.g.* **NHS England, BBC** and **Public Health England**); **DON'T rely on social media** which are full of false and corrupt reports. 1/4

Question 2

I FEEL UNWELL: COULD IT BE CORONAVIRUS?

Answer:

These are the possible **SIGNS** and **SYMPTOMS** of **Coronavirus** which can be similar to a cold or flu', and can occur individually or together:

- A raised temperature (normally 37.8 degrees and above)
- Dry cough
- Shortness of breath
- Tiredness

Question 3

IF I HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Answer:

If you have **DIFFICULTY IN BREATHING CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY**, ask for "**Ambulance**" and **tell the call-handler that you have breathing problems**. (The first question s/he will ask you will be about your breathing.) They will decide how serious it is, and whether you need to be seen by paramedics. An ambulance crew may be sent to assess you. You may first be treated at home and then referred to a GP, or you may be taken to hospital. **Have ready a list of your current medications and any recent hospital discharge letters** to give to the Ambulance crew or GP.

NB: Do make sure you **understand the advice you are given** - have it repeated until you do. **YOU MAY BE TESTED FOR CORONAVIRUS** (the result could take a few hours). If you are found to have the virus, you may be

- **treated at home** (if the infection is mild) **or**
- **admitted to hospital** (where you will be separated from other patients to avoid spreading the infection)

IF YOU LIVE ALONE, make sure every person treating you knows **this**. **If you have been admitted to hospital, have it confirmed before you are discharged that the support you will need at home is in place.** (Remember to tell staff if you have a pet or pets).

Question 4

I FEEL UNWELL BUT MY SYMPTOMS ARE MILD. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Answer:

Stay at home for 7 days if you have a new, persistent cough and/or a fever of 37.8 degrees and above

DON'T visit your GP

DON'T go to A&E

DON'T invite people into your home

DON'T go out or visit neighbours in your block or street

CALL 111 or your GP only if your symptoms worsen during the next 4 or 5 days. You will not need a coronavirus test unless you feel worse. 2/4

Question 5

HOW DO I COPE IF I LIVE ALONE and I need to SELF-ISOLATE or be QUARANTINED AT HOME?

Answer:

The Government wants to protect older people, especially those with other conditions (e.g. heart disease, cancer, diabetes etc.) from being exposed to coronavirus. It has promised to bringing forward detailed plans for this. These will include helping older people avoid crowded places and providing support to enable them to stay safely at home. Many more volunteers will be required along with additional resources which the Government has undertaken to release "when the time is right" *i.e.* when the virus is at its peak. Meanwhile:

BE PREPARED! - you may never need to "self-isolate" or be quarantined, but it's wise to make some preparations to avoid being caught without things you might need. Here are some suggestions:

- Make sure you have **basic supplies** to tide you over including pet food and cat litter if you keep a pet(s). (Suggestions below on page 4).
DON'T STOCKPILE IN LARGE QUANTITIES – you don't need to!
- Keep a list of useful **telephone numbers** handy. (Suggestions below).
- Keep your mobile `phone (if you have one) **fully charged**.
- **Listen regularly to TV/radio news bulletins** for updated advice.
- Be sure you have enough **batteries** in stock (e.g. for hearing aids, TV remote control etc.)
- Check that you have adequate supplies of your usual **medications** and **consumables** (checklist on page 4); also that **your local pharmacy will deliver** if you cannot leave home. (*NB* your pharmacy isn't allowed to exceed the amounts you are normally prescribed).
- Buy/borrow a **reliable thermometer** so you can check your temperature to get early warning of any infection. If you do have one, **check that it's working properly**.
- **Keep some cash at home** (for taxis, reimbursing shoppers etc.)
- Only give your **credit or bank cards** to someone **you trust**.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS TO HAVE BY YOU

- GP Practice (or 111 if closed); 999 for a life-threatening emergency
- Local Pharmacy
- Dental surgery
- City of London Social Services (0207 606 3030 ask for Adult Social Care)
- Age UK East London (02089817124 9.30-5; if busy, re-try after 20min)
- POLICE (local number; use 999 only in an emergency).
- Family members
- Neighbours/friends (for emergency help)
- Taxi - cab firm (for Taxi-card) or Dial-a-Ride
- Local supermarket (for deliveries – possibly free in an emergency; Sainsbury's has a telephone ordering service).

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WHAT TO KEEP IN STOCK (in case you can't get to the shops as usual)

Food and drink (long-life)

- **Long-life milk**
- Bottled water
- **Canned soups** (look for ring-pull cans that open easily)
- Canned fruit
- Long-life custard
- Canned fish
- Canned meat, including minced meat
- Canned vegetables (including baked beans)
- Cooked packet rice, pasta and noodles
- Cereals
- Microwavable porridge (if you have a microwave)
- Oat biscuits, crispbreads
- **Tea bags**
- Coffee
- **Pet food** (if you have a pet(s))

Other consumables

- **Paracetamol**
- **Hand sanitiser gel and wipes** (must contain **at least 60% alcohol**)
- **Toilet rolls**
- Toilet cleaner
- **Tissues**
- Kitchen paper towels
- **Incontinence pads**
- **Washing-up liquid**
- Disinfectant
- **Soap** (bars or liquid)
- **Toothpaste/ denture cleaner**
- Washing powder or laundry liquid
- **Cat litter** (if required)
- **Rubbish bags**

KEEPING SECURE AND SAFE

DO check the ID of people you don't know who may 'phone you or call round offering help e.g. by doing your shopping. USE THE DOOR CHAIN when opening the door; NEVER give pin numbers, bank or credit cards to visitors at the door; NEVER give card details to anyone asking for them over the 'phone. CALL THE POLICE IF YOU ARE WORRIED or SUSPICIOUS.

And keep in mind **older folk you know of who may be particularly at risk.**
Why not give them a call to see they're 'o.k.'?

Doesn't everybody need good neighbours?

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