

# Coronavirus (COVID-19): Protecting yourself and others

Infection, Prevention and Control Team

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## Introduction

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a coronavirus. COVID-19 can be spread through droplets from coughs, sneezes and speaking. These microscopic droplets can be inhaled or can be picked up by touching surfaces and then touching the face.

People with coronavirus can have very mild or no symptoms at all. This means they can spread the virus to other people without knowing. In hospital, we provide care for vulnerable patients and our staff see lots of patients a day, so it is very important that we all take responsibility for reducing the spread of COVID-19. We ask you to take the following steps whilst you are here:

## Regular hand hygiene

COVID-19 and other viruses can stay on surfaces for some time. Please wash your hands with soap and water, or use alcohol hand gel, as often as possible. Try not to touch your face, i.e. (mouth, nose, eyes) and follow good respiratory practice; for example coughing into a tissue and regular hand hygiene to control the spread of infection.

## Wear a mask

Evidence has shown that covering the nose and mouth with the use of a face mask can help reduce the risk of spread of infection. The use of face coverings, such as scarves, should be avoided by staff, patients or visitors within the Trust. They do not offer the same level of protection as face masks.

All hospital staff, clinical and non-clinical, must wear a surgical face mask as a minimum at all times when on Trust sites. Patients within all settings e.g. Outpatient, Inpatient, Emergency department and Urgent Treatment Centre settings must be provided with and be expected to wear a face mask, unless clinically impossible, (for example when receiving oxygen therapy via a mask).

Patients and visitors who are wearing their own mask on arrival to the Trust will be asked to remove it, decontaminate their hands using alcohol hand gel, and put on a surgical mask. Surgical face masks are available at the hospital entrances and reception areas. For inpatients, face masks are available at receptions and in all wards and departments.

**If you cannot wear a mask for any reason, please talk to your Care team about what to do.**

## How to wear a face mask

The face mask should cover the nose and the mouth at all times to effectively prevent the spread of infection. A face mask can be worn until damp or uncomfortable. When a face mask is inappropriate due to health or condition, strict social distancing of 2 metres from other patients must be maintained.

To reduce the risk:

- Wash your hands before applying a clean face mask
- Ensure the face mask is comfortable, covering both the nose and mouth
- Do not touch the face mask once it is in position
- If you accidentally touch your mask, please wash your hands immediately
- Do not allow it to dangle around your neck after use or between use
- Please remove your mask by the straps, avoiding touching the front of the mask, and immediately dispose of it in a waste bin
- Always clean your hands thoroughly on removal of your mask – there is guidance on how to wash your hands effectively next to all hand wash basins in the hospital/ outpatient and clinic settings
- You can use soap and running water, or alcohol hand rub/ hand sanitiser, to clean your hands.
- If your mask becomes uncomfortable, if it is difficult to breathe or if the mask gets wet, please remove and discard it, wash your hands and apply a new/clean mask.
- For spectacle wearers, if the use of a face mask causes spectacles to steam up, twisting the face mask straps and applying pressure across the bridge of the nose to ensure a 'snug fit' may help prevent this.

### Correct wearing of a face mask



Completely covering the nose and mouth

**Please ask your Care team if you need help or are not sure what to do.**

## Make space for others

In addition to wearing a face mask, we all need to remember to make space for other people. Leaving at least 2 metres between you and other people will reduce the risk of you catching or spreading COVID-19. Sitting near to other patients or socialising with them at their bedside must be avoided.

## Stay in place

Please do not visit other parts of the hospital unless you are asked to by a member of staff. If you are asked to stay in a waiting or treatment area, please stay there. If you need to go somewhere or want to get something (for example, food/ drink or go outside for fresh air), please check with your Care team first. Avoid meeting up with family members and friends outdoors if you are an inpatient.

## Other ways of keeping everyone safe from COVID-19 in hospital

To help us all keep safe, **please do not:**

- sit on other patients' beds or seats
- share food, drink or other items (e.g. newspapers)
- pick up or move items for other people
- help other patients to walk or move

## Working together to protect each other

It is OK to remind all staff, doctors, nurses and other patients that we need to make space for each other. Reminders can help us all to look out for each other.

## Patient / Visitor Charter

We want to keep you, your family, other patients and our staff safe while you are here. Coronavirus passes from person to person quickly and easily and is a real risk to those around us. You can pass it on to people even if you do not have symptoms of the virus.

We all have a responsibility to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Because we care, we may ask you to do things differently while you are here.

While I am at Wrightington Wigan and Leigh NHS Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust, I understand that I will be asked to:

### Wear a mask

(please tick).

Patients should wear a mask (covering your nose and mouth) at all times unless you are not able to (this will be agreed between you and your care team). All carers and visitors should wear a face covering at all times, unless exempt.

### Make space for others

(please tick).

2 metres is the safe distance to stay from other people in hospital. Patients and visitors should not sit on other patients' beds or seats, share food or drink, pick up/move items that are not theirs, or physically help other patients. Ask a member of staff if you need help.

### Stay in one place to keep people safe

(please tick).

Please do not visit other parts of the hospital unless asked to by a member of staff. If asked to stay in a waiting or treatment area, please stay there. If you want or think you need to go somewhere, check with your care team first.

Our staff play an important role in keeping our hospital safe. It's ok to remind doctors, nurses and fellow patients that we need to make space for each other and to cover our mouths and noses. Reminders can help us all to look out for each other.

Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....

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## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager  
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary  
Wigan Lane  
Wigan WN1 2NN

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## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



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## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk>

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This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in the department/ward.

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