

# COVID-19

**This leaflet provides information about COVID-19. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your care.**

## What is COVID-19 and why have I got it?

COVID-19 is an infection caused by a virus known as SARS-CoV-2, which belongs to a large family of viruses called Coronaviruses. Coronaviruses are common throughout the world in both animals and humans and are also responsible for illnesses like the common cold.

Most people infected with COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without special treatment. However, older people and those with underlying medical conditions or who are immunosuppressed are more at risk of becoming seriously ill.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

You may have one or more of the following symptoms, which are similar to cold and flu:

- High temperature or fever
- New continuous cough
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling tired or exhausted
- Body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Blocked or runny nose
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Feeling sick / being sick

## **Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?**

If you present or develop symptoms similar to cold and flu, a nose and throat swab will be collected and sent to the laboratory where it is tested. Alternatively, if you are symptomatic and staff are suspicious of a COVID-19 infection, a lateral flow test (LFT) maybe performed providing a result within 15 minutes.

## **What happens if my result is positive?**

If you result is positive, you will be moved into a single room or cohort bay with other COVID-19 positive patients. Healthcare staff will care for you wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as face mask and visors / goggles, gloves and aprons as required. If you remain in hospital, you will stay isolated for a minimum of seven days from the date of diagnosis to prevent transmission and to protect other patients from the risk of infection.

## **When can I go home?**

You will be allowed to go home when you are well enough to be discharged, regardless of COVID-19 status. Although isolation is no longer required in the community, it is advised that you continue to self-isolate until at least seven days from the date of diagnosis if you are discharged prior to completion of your isolation period to prevent transmission.

## **How can I protect others I live with?**

- Decontaminate your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or alcohol hand gel.
- Regularly clean high touch surfaces and shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and decontaminate your
- Keep indoor areas well-ventilated by opening windows where possible.

hands with soap and water  
or alcohol hand gel  
immediately afterwards.

### **Useful sources of information**

NHS UK conditions

**[COVID-19 symptoms and what to do - NHS](#)**

### **Contact us**

If you have any questions or concerns about COVID-19, please contact Infection Prevention and Control on 020 8725 2459 (Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5.00pm)

If you have any questions about your condition, please talk to one of the nursing or medical staff. You can also ask the ward manager to contact us.

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

### **Was this information helpful? Yes / No**

**Please let us know, contact**

**[patient.information@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@stgeorges.nhs.uk) and include the leaflet title.**

**Thank you.**

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### **Additional services**

#### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:  
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm  
Friday between 10am and 2pm.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.  
Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings.

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## **NHS UK**

The NHS provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## **NHS 111**

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

## **AccessAble**

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

