

# Guidance for those at higher risk regarding Coronavirus

Available at:

[www.gov.je/shielding](http://www.gov.je/shielding)

## Updated guidance for Islanders at high and moderate risk

We are shifting away from using the term 'vulnerable' towards language around 'risk'. This is to emphasise that with current low levels of Coronavirus (COVID-19) higher risk Islanders are more empowered to make their own choices about the activities they chose to engage in.

Advice for higher risk groups is constantly under review. It currently reflects the very low levels of virus in Jersey, but if the level increases, guidance may change.

## Islanders at moderate risk

For people of older ages, and for people with certain medical conditions, there are additional risks if you become infected with COVID-19. Conditions that put someone in the moderate risk (vulnerable) category include:

- less severe respiratory conditions
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease, such as kidney failure
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, stroke, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- diabetes type 1 or type 2 requiring insulin or oral hypoglycaemic drugs or diet-controlled
- problems with your spleen, for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or above)
- currently pregnant

The way people are affected by the virus varies largely across different individuals. In terms of age, the impact will likely be most linked to level of frailty, strength of immunity and the presence of underlying conditions and ill-health, rather than a person's exact age as a number alone. Individuals should see the risk as higher the older they are, but also be aware that this can vary from person to person. For this reason we are no longer using any particular age as threshold in highlighting risk relating to COVID-19.

## Recommendations for Islanders at moderate risk

In light of the current very low levels of COVID-19 in Jersey, if you're at moderate risk (vulnerable) you're encouraged to return to your routine where it is safe to do so, but to be especially cautious to follow [public health information and advice](#).

If it is not possible for you to work from home, you may return to your work place, if it has been agreed with your employer that this can be done safely.

The Activity Risk Guide can be used to help Islanders at moderate risk to make personal choices and balance risks relating to the everyday activities they engage in.

During this time, it is crucial that moderate risk groups still attend medical appointments and seek medical advice where needed, whether this is COVID-related or not.

## Islanders at high risk

If you have one of the health conditions listed below, you are considered high risk of severe illness as a result of COVID-19 and more likely to need hospital treatment if you're infected.

Conditions that mean people are high risk (severely vulnerable) are:

- Solid organ transplant recipients.
- People with specific cancers:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
  - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
  - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
  - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
  - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
- Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

## Recommendations for Islanders at high risk

In light of the current very low levels of COVID-19 in Jersey, if you are at high risk (extremely vulnerable) you can undertake outdoor leisure or recreational activities, such as to exercise, or see family and friends, as long as you can physically distance from those you do not live with, and carefully follow the [public health information and advice](#). You are advised to avoid indoor activities outside of your own home wherever possible.

You should continue to undertake work from home where this is possible but going out to work is currently not recommended, unless for example, you work alone and do not need to take public transport to travel to your work place.

The Activity Risk Guide can be used to help Islanders at high risk to make personal choices and balance risks relating to the everyday activities they engage in.

If you have a condition that you think will make you high risk but do not receive a letter from your doctor by the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, you should call them for further advice and clarification.

During this time, it is crucial that high risk groups still attend medical appointments and seek medical advice where needed, whether this is COVID-related or not.

## **Further detailed guidance for Islanders at high risk**

### **Visitors and carers in your home**

It is strongly advised that you do not have any visitors into your home at this time if you are identified as high risk, unless they are providing essential care for you. Essential care includes things like health or social care, and help with washing, dressing or eating.

Carers, or anyone providing essential support, must stay away if they have any of the symptoms of Coronavirus. They should wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds on entering your home, and then often while they are there. They should also try to observe physical distancing guidelines wherever practical while delivering your care.

You should have an alternative list of people who can help you with your care if your main carer becomes unwell.

### **Providing care for someone who is high risk, including children and young people**

If you are a carer or parent of someone who is high risk ensure you carefully follow key public health messages throughout your daily routine and whether you are with the high risk person or not. This will reduce the chance of you being infected with and passing on COVID-19. This includes the following simple steps:

- follow physical distancing guidance in your daily routine and also when delivering care wherever this is possible
- wash your hands often using soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser
- keep your distance if you are unwell and make alternative arrangements for care.

If you are a professional carer this is to be considered in addition to guidance from your own organisation, and does not replace it.

Further advice for carers is available by at: [www.gov.je/PPEForEssentialWorkers](http://www.gov.je/PPEForEssentialWorkers)

### **If you have someone else living with you, including children and young people**

Those you live with can continue with their routine or go to work if they cannot work from home. They should be careful to follow physical distancing and other public health guidance measures, to reduce the chance of them passing on an infection to you.

Children and young people living with someone who is high risk can go to school but should follow physical distancing guidance and other key public health guidance measures where they are able to understand this.

## **Support with food and medicines delivery to your home, or any other needs.**

The 'Connect Me' service offers help around many areas you may need extra support with at this time, such as finances and accommodation, family and domestic concerns, health and wellbeing.

You can also get help with delivery of essential supplies to your home, such as food or medicine.

To find out more you can:

- Phone the Coronavirus Help Line on +44 (0) 1534 445566,
- Call your Parish Hall and ask about 'Connect Me'
- Visit [www.gov.je/connectme](http://www.gov.je/connectme)

## **Other resources and support for Islanders at high and moderate risk**

[Connect Me](#) offers information, help and support for Islanders around finances, family, health and wellbeing. You can access Connect Me by calling the Coronavirus helpline: [+44 \(0\) 1534 445566](tel:+4401534445566)

If you are struggling with your mental or emotional wellbeing there are free and confidential services available to you:

- Call the Listening Lounge on +44 (0) 1534 866793 from 10am to 10pm daily, a free confidential service for adults aged 18.
- Call MIND Jersey on +44 (0) 1534 866793 or +44(0) 800 7359404, who are running a free hotline from 8am to 6pm every day, to support people through these difficult times.
- Access 'Every Mind Matters', an online resource which provides simple tips and advice to take care of your mental health. This can be accessed for free online at: [www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/)
- Phone the Coronavirus Help Line on: +44 (0) 1534 445566
- Phone 999 in an emergency

Further information and guidance is available at:

[COVID-19 FAQs for patients on the Primary Care Body website](#)

Contact [Macmillan Jersey's](#) on [+44 \(0\) 1534 498188](tel:+4401534498188) for emotional and practical support over the phone if you are affected by cancer in Jersey.