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Scottish Government  
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gov.scot  
vernment

**[Patient Name**

Patient address Line 1

Patient address Line 2

Patient address Line 3]

## ### 2020

**IMPORTANT: PERSONAL**

**Your Community Health Index (CHI) number: [CHI NUMBER]**

**YOU HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE SHIELDING LIST**

Dear [Patient],

You're receiving this letter because your clinician has identified you as being at very high risk of severe illness if you catch Coronavirus (COVID-19). This is because you have an underlying health condition. This means you have been added to the shielding list. This list allows us to support people who are at high risk if the infection rates in Scotland rise again.

We continue to monitor COVID-19 infection rates across Scotland carefully. At this time, though there has been a small rise in the number of cases, generally the rates of infection are low. This means that your chances of catching the virus are low. That is why **we are asking you to follow the same guidance as everyone else in Scotland** right now.

If you live in a residential care or nursing home, there is specific advice for you. You can find this at [www.gov.scot/carehomevisiting](http://www.gov.scot/carehomevisiting).

Though **shielding has paused**, we are continuing to support you by:

- keeping you on the list of shielding people, so we can contact you with any changes – you can request to be removed from the list by asking your GP or hospital clinician
- sending you information and updates on localised outbreaks by text from our text messaging service

- giving you access to up-to-date advice and guidance at [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding)  
– to help you understand your individual risk and what you can do to keep yourself safe in daily life

### **Remember to follow FACTS to stay safe**

Face coverings – wear them in shops, inside restaurants and cafes, and on public transport

Avoid crowded places

Clean your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds

Two metre distance – maintain physical distancing from anyone who's not in your household

Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms

### **Keeping up-to-date**

We will tell you immediately if we think you need to shield to stay safe. You can keep up-to-date with any changes by tuning into the First Minister's briefings. You'll find the latest advice for people on the shielding list on [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding) and on NHS Inform. When you join our text messaging service we'll send you the latest updates direct to your mobile phone.

There have been some local outbreaks in some areas of Scotland. At the moment, there is no need for you to start shielding during these outbreaks. This is because we are taking quick action to manage these, contain the spread of the virus and keep you safe.

Many people on the shielding list have joined the text messaging service from the Scottish Government. This is so they can receive alerts and updates straight to their mobile phones.

If you would like to join, please send a text from your mobile phone with your Community Health Index (CHI) number to **07860 064525**. Your CHI number is the ten-digit number shown at the top of this letter. You do not need to text any other information.

Once we've got your CHI number, we'll send you a text to confirm that you've joined. Please note that the service only accepts text messages. It does not take voice calls.

If you cannot join the text messaging service or need to ask a question about shielding, call the free national helpline number on 0800 111 4000. The helpline is open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm, and will put you in touch with someone from your local council.

The Scottish Government have included further advice and information about available support with this letter. Please do read it carefully. You can access the full COVID-19 guidance for Scotland at [www.mygov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.mygov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19).

Yours sincerely,



**DR GREGOR SMITH**  
INTERIM CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

## **INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO HELP KEEP YOU SAFE**

### **PLEASE READ**

#### **Protect Scotland app**

Download the free Protect Scotland app to help stop COVID-19 spreading again. The app sends alerts to people who have been in close contact with someone else using the app who has tested positive. Being 'in close contact with someone' means being less than 2 metres away from them for at least 15 minutes. The alert will ask you to self-isolate for 14 days. If you start to develop symptoms you should call 111.

You can also use the app to send anonymous alerts to let other people know if you test positive. The app does not use up much data, and does not record your identity or location. For more information and to download the app visit [www.protect.scot](http://www.protect.scot). Please ask your friends and family to download it too. We know not everyone will be able to or want to access the app. However, they will still benefit from the protection that it offers all of us in Scotland.

#### **Case numbers in your area**

You can find information on the number of COVID-19 cases in your area at [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding).

There is a link to a dashboard that Public Health Scotland update daily. We are also working hard on a new tool to show you in more detail what's happening in your local area. We will let you know further updates on that through the text messaging service soon.

#### **If you have symptoms of COVID-19**

If it's an emergency, whether related to COVID-19 or not, phone 999. If you think you have developed symptoms of COVID-19, phone the NHS on 111. Symptoms include:

- a new, continuous cough
- a high temperature (above 37.8°C) and/or
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

#### **If you, or the person you care for, has cancer**

This advice is for anyone who has had chemotherapy or radiotherapy for a cancer within the last 6 weeks. If you feel ill, phone someone straight away. Call the emergency Scottish Cancer Treatment Helpline on 0800 917 7711 or the emergency number given to you by your consultant. You should call even if you do not think feeling unwell is due to COVID-19.

## Mental health and wellbeing

If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, depressed or worried, please call:

Breathing Space	0800 83 85 87	Monday to Thursday: 6pm – 2am Friday to Monday: 6pm – 6am
Samaritans	116 123	Every day: 24 hours a day
British Red Cross	0808 196 3651	Every day: 10am – 6pm

You can also book GP appointments for support. Help is available online too from the Scottish Association of Mental Health at [www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk).

## Access to healthcare

It is vital that you get the care you need in the safest way possible. To make sure this happens, your needs will be assessed by a clinician as part of your GP or hospital care.

Your clinician may decide it is best to carry out an appointment over the telephone. They might also suggest Near Me – a video calling service used by the NHS. Other times, a face to face appointment may happen at your home or in a practice, health centre or hospital.

You should follow the advice your clinician provides as they know you and your condition personally. Before COVID-19, clinicians would have advised some people to stop doing certain things or meeting with other people. This was because of their specific health condition or treatment. You should always ask your healthcare team if you're unsure about any health advice or treatment.

## Flu Vaccine

You should soon be receiving a letter inviting you and anyone else in your household for a free flu vaccination. If you're able to get the flu vaccine, you should get this as soon as possible. The flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 but it will help protect you and your household from this year's flu.

Contact your GP if you have not received a letter in the next few weeks.

## Face coverings

You must wear a face covering when visiting shops and on public transport. You must now also wear them inside cafes, restaurants and pubs when not eating and drinking. This is unless you have a health condition or disability that makes wearing one hard for you. You do not need proof of this. Other people who do not need to wear a face covering include:

- children under 5
- people taking certain types of medication
- people who are communicating with someone who lip reads

By face coverings, we mean a facial covering of your mouth and nose. This can be made of cloth or other textiles, for example a scarf, through which you can breathe. We do not mean a surgical or other medical grade mask.

If outdoors, our advice is to maintain physical distancing as much as you can. This is the best way to stay safe. If you do this, you do not need to wear a face covering outside.

## Getting outdoors and staying active

We know that going out of your front door can be an anxious time for some people. Getting outside can have lots of physical and mental health benefits. Try to remember that COVID-19 is much less likely to pass from person to person when you're outdoors.

Staying active is good for your mental health and wellbeing. When you are feeling able to, we encourage you to do whatever level of physical activity feels comfortable for you.

You may find that you need to improve your strength and balance if you haven't been as active as you would like. There are a lot of things you can do to help you stay steady and reduce your chances of falling. You can find more information at [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding).

## **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D is very important for keeping your bones and muscles healthy. Sunlight is our main source of Vitamin D. The amount of sun needed varies from person to person. Around 10-15 minutes of unprotected Scottish sun exposure is safe for all. This is one of the many benefits of getting outdoors if you can. Remember to use sunscreen to protect your skin if you are staying in the sun for longer than 15 minutes.

We recommend that everyone consider taking a daily 10 microgram (10µg) supplement of vitamin D. Particularly during the autumn and winter months when we are unable to make vitamin D from sunlight. Find more information at [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding).

## **Going to work**

Our advice is that you should carry on working from home, if you can. If you are going into work, you should follow physical distancing advice. If you cannot, your employer must put other measures in place to help keep you safe.

The Scottish Government and medical professionals have made guidance available to you and your employer. A key part of this is a workplace risk assessment tool. You can access this at [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding). The guidance should not replace medical advice. It can help ensure measures are put into place to give you confidence in going to your workplace.

## **Help with money**

If you're worried about money, you can get help and support online, through the Money Talk Team at [www.moneytalkteam.org.uk](http://www.moneytalkteam.org.uk). Or you can call them on 0800 085 7145.

## **Going to school**

We expect all children who are on the shielding list to be able to go to school as normal. Unless they are given advice not to from their GP or healthcare provider.

You can find information about your child's safety when going to school on the Parent Club website at [www.parentclub.scot/articles/reopening-schools-faqs](http://www.parentclub.scot/articles/reopening-schools-faqs). If you're worried about this, you can speak to your child's school.

## **Data Protection Statement**

You have been identified from either your GP practice, local Health Board or securely stored national data in order that we could write to you. We want to reassure you that this information has only been shared in a limited way within the NHS in Scotland and did not

include your medical record. During this time, we will keep your contact details in case we need to contact you again. We will also notify your GP and your Health Board that you have been contacted in order that they can provide appropriate support. To provide some of the support noted above, we may share your contact details only with your council. This is only so that they can support you during this difficult time. This action is only being taken due to the current COVID-19 outbreak. We want to assure you that your local council would not receive any details of your medical condition or health record.

You can request your contact details to be removed from the shielding list by asking your GP or hospital clinician.

### **A quick guide for people who are at higher risk**

The number of people who are infectious is much lower at the moment. However, the risk is still the same if you were to become infected with the virus. You may want to consider this when making decisions about what is important to you.



Keep 2 metres apart



Wash hands regularly



Let in fresh air



Reduce exposure time

	Low risk	Higher risk
<b>Being active</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercising outdoors alone</li> <li>Outdoor non-contact activities</li> <li>Going swimming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdoor contact sports</li> <li>Indoor non-contact activities</li> <li>Going to the gym</li> </ul>
<b>Health and care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Getting personal care at home</li> <li>Seeing your GP or clinician</li> <li>Going to a pharmacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing care for others</li> <li>Sitting in a busy waiting room</li> <li>Visiting a day centre</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting people outdoors</li> <li>Forming an extended household</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting people indoors</li> <li>Physical contact with people you do not live with</li> </ul>
<b>Shopping and leisure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Going to an outdoor market</li> <li>Going to the shops</li> <li>Getting your haircut</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Going to a museum</li> <li>Going to a busy beach</li> <li>Going to the cinema</li> </ul>
<b>Travel and holidays</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay for petrol at the pump</li> <li>Self-catering accommodation</li> <li>Travelling outwith your area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Going in someone else's car</li> <li>Staying at a hotel</li> <li>Travelling by bus or train</li> </ul>
<b>Eating and drinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Picnic outside with others</li> <li>Sitting outside a café, restaurant or pub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having people over for a meal</li> <li>Sitting inside a café, restaurant or pub</li> </ul>

[mygov.scot/shielding](https://mygov.scot/shielding)

For school and work, see separate guidance

# Staying safe with daily activities (for those at highest risk)

There are simple things you can do to help you stay safe as you do more activities outside your home.

<b>Seeing friends and family</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about how likely it is that the person you are meeting up with has come into contact with the virus</li> <li>• Stay outdoors or open windows if inside</li> <li>• Wash your hands or use a hand sanitiser often</li> <li>• Bring your own food, plates and cutlery if eating together</li> <li>• Not eat from the same bowl as others</li> </ul>	<b>Going shopping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid queues by choosing to go at quieter times</li> <li>• Put on your face covering before wiping the handles of your trolley or basket</li> <li>• Use self-scan or self-checkout so it's only you touching your items</li> <li>• Consider using contactless payment</li> <li>• Wash your hands or use a hand sanitiser as soon as you can</li> </ul>
<b>Eating and drinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose quieter times or sit in quiet areas</li> <li>• Stay outside if you can and sit in an outdoor seating area</li> <li>• Avoid going into 1 metre zones</li> <li>• Sit facing away from people not with you</li> <li>• Wash your hands or use a hand sanitiser before and after eating</li> <li>• Consider using contactless payment</li> </ul>	<b>Leisure venues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid queues and book in advance</li> <li>• Choose times that are likely to be quiet</li> <li>• Avoid going into 1 metre zones</li> <li>• Avoid touching hard surfaces and use a hand sanitiser if you do</li> <li>• Choose businesses with enhanced hygiene measures</li> </ul>
<b>Public transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book tickets in advance if you can</li> <li>• Choose times that are likely to be quiet</li> <li>• Put on your face covering before getting on</li> <li>• Avoid touching hard surfaces and use a hand sanitiser if you do</li> <li>• Sit near an open window if you can</li> <li>• Wash your hands or use a hand sanitiser as soon as you get off</li> </ul>	<b>General hygiene</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to avoid touching your face when outside your home</li> <li>• Wash or dispose of your face covering after using</li> <li>• Take a bag to put used tissues into</li> <li>• Take a hand sanitiser and use it regularly</li> <li>• Avoid anyone with symptoms</li> </ul>