Self-isolation Q&A

Q1. What does self-isolation mean?

A: If you are self-isolating you cannot leave your home because you have, or might have, COVID. By staying at home, the virus cannot be transmitted to other people.
- do not go to work, school or public places – work from home if you can
- do not go on public transport or use taxis
- do not go out to get food and medicine – order it online or by phone, or ask someone to bring it to your home
- do not have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care
- do not go out to exercise – exercise at home or in your garden, if you have one

Q2. Who should self-isolate?

A: You should self-isolate if:
- you have any symptoms of COVID, (high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- you are waiting for results or have had a positive test for coronavirus
- you live with someone who has symptoms or tested positive
- someone in your support bubble (e.g. at school or work) has symptoms or tested positive
- you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app or the Local Authority Contact Tracing Team

  -

If anyone else in your household displays any COVID symptoms, please keep all the family at home and request a test. Please do not send your children to school if anyone in your household is awaiting a test or the results of a test.
You can book a free test online at https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/ or calling 119.

Q3: Can I book a coronavirus test if I have been told that I am a close contact of a positive case, but have no symptoms?

A: Yes, from 30th March 2021, contacts of positive cases, who are not experiencing symptoms, will be offered a PCR test which they can book on the government website (or through 119). This testing will be via a home PCR testing kit.

Q4: As a close contact of a positive case, if I take a PCR test and the result is negative, can I stop self-isolating?

A: No. You must complete your full 10 days self-isolation. 10 days is calculated from the last point of contact with the positive case, or if you live in the same household, from the onset of symptoms if symptomatic or date of positive test if asymptomatic.

Q5: What should I do if I test positive during self-isolation?

A: If you test positive, self-isolate for 10 days from when your symptoms started, even if it means self-isolating for longer than 10 days in total. If you test positive and do not have symptoms, then self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test.

Q6: Can I stop self-isolating after 10 days if I no longer have any symptoms?

A: You can stop self-isolating after 10 days if you do not get any symptoms. Keep self-isolating and get a test if you get symptoms. Get a test to check if you have coronavirus if you get symptoms while you're self-isolating. If your test is negative, you must keep self-isolating for the remainder of the 10 days.

Q7: Why is this only 10 days?

A: This is because once you have COVID, you are only infectious - i.e. you can only pass the virus on to someone else - for 10 days.

Q8: If my child returns from school saying they have been in contact with a positive COVID case, does the whole household need to self-isolate?

A: No, only the person that has been identified as a contact of a positive case needs to self-isolate. But if anyone in the household does develop symptoms, everyone should isolate and get a test.

Q9: How soon can my child return to school - can they only return after 10 days?

A: A child can return to school 10 days after their last contact with a person who has tested positive with COVID, as long as they have not developed symptoms or tested positive themselves. The school should tell you when the child can return.

Q10: Once we have completed the 10 days, do we need to be re-tested?

A: No. After 10 days you may still have some traces of the virus in your body, so having another test could give you another positive result, even though you should no longer be able to pass the virus on to anyone else.

Q11: I have recently (within 90 days) tested positive for COVID-19, should I take a coronavirus test?

A: No. Do not do a coronavirus test if you have had a positive COVID-19 test result in the last 90 days. This is because the test may pick up COVID-19 after you have recovered from it and are no longer infectious.

This document highlights some key questions and answers about self-isolation and if you would like further detail you can check the NHS advice at:

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-long-to-self-isolate/

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/