

Staying well with...

Diabetes



A COVID-19 wellbeing resource & 'e-signposting' guide





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Staying well with Diabetes during the COVID19 pandemic

Stay Alert - Control the Virus - Save Lives

Over many months, since March 2020, guidance set out by the government has highlighted actions that **all citizens in England** must take to minimise the risks posed by the current coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic to the population.

General advice to the public is set out as below:

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- wash your hands regularly

Do not leave home if you or anyone in your household has symptoms.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 (also known as coronavirus) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus. To find about more about COVID-19 and to see answers to frequently asked questions, please visit: https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

If you have further questions about COVID-19 and how it might affect you or your health then you may find it helpful to talk to healthcare professionals such as your GP or clinicians from any healthcare teams that may care for you and support you with your health condition(s) in addition to reading the frequently asked questions and reading information on the government websites.

How do I stay alert and keep safe if I have diabetes?

The best way to find out how to stay alert and keep safe if you have an underlying health condition is to:

1. **Talk to a healthcare professional** who is involved in monitoring and supporting you to care for yourself with your health condition (e.g. GP, nurse specialists or someone else from your medical team).





- 2. **Visit physical health charity websites** that have worked with the NHS to produce COVID-19 advice: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/other-conditions-and-coronavirus/
- 3. Visit the government website which contains clear and detailed information about how to protect yourself and stay alert if you have an underlying health condition: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people

COVID-19 vulnerable groups

There are certain groups of people who are more 'vulnerable' to COVID-19, meaning that there is a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 *if they were to get the virus*.

Having diabetes makes you more 'vulnerable' to COVID-19 as defined above. There are two COVID-19 vulnerable groups. It is important to find out which group you are in, if you do not know, and what steps you need to take to protect yourself and those around you from COVID-19.

There are two COVID-19 'vulnerable' groups:

A clinically vulnerable group: this includes particular groups of individuals such as
those with certain physical health conditions (this applies to <u>some people with</u>
<u>diabetes</u>), those aged over 70, those with a BMI of 40 or above and pregnant women.

The people in this 'vulnerable' group are *strongly advised* to engage in "social distancing". Support for people in this group is available via NHS volunteers (Web: https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders-portal/isolating; Tel: 0808 196 3646) or through local councils).

For updates or more information visit:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people

 An extremely vulnerable group: this includes individuals with specific physical health conditions or needs (this applies to <u>some people with diabetes</u>).

The people in this 'extremely vulnerable' group are strongly advised to engage in "shielding". Guidance on this will be reviewed and updated over time in line with changes to COVID-19 infection rates. People in this group are also able to register online (https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable) or call **0800 028 8327** for additional support.





For updates and more information visit:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

If this applies to you, you should receive letters, texts or advice from your GP or your hospital/community healthcare team telling you to "shield" and informing you of updates to shielding guidance. If you feel you should be in this group and have not heard or you are unsure, then please contact your GP or your specialist medical team who can talk about this with you.

COVID-19 support & information

For more information on COVID-19 and diabetes please see diabetes UK website: https://www.diabetes.org.uk/about_us/news/coronavirus

For translated information (in 60 languages) about COVID-19 and vulnerability groups visit: https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/coronavirus-information/

For employment support/ support hub English & translated guidance visit: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/employment-rights-hub

For further information and guidance for non-UK nationals visit: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/eu-londoners-hub/information-coronavirus-covid-19-non-uk-nationals





Staying well during this time: some wellbeing advice

With everything that is going on at the moment in the world, this can be a very *scary* and *uncertain* time, especially for those with long-term health problems such as **diabetes** whereby you still have to arrange and receive treatments for your condition while also being encouraged to stay at home.

It can be additionally difficult if you have parents, a partner and/or children to care for, as well as following all of the guidance and taking care of yourself and your health.

We all have *different reserves for coping* with challenges – we all have different sized buckets!



https://mentalhealth-uk.org/blog/the-stress-bucket/

A pandemic like we are going through with COVID-19 is one very significant challenge with lots of stress taps and our buckets are different sizes, so we all have different ways of coping to relive the stress in our buckets for coping with COVID-19 overspill.

Below are some simple tips and information to help anyone with **Diabetes** to cope during the current pandemic:





1. Seek out practical support and help with shopping and groceries so that you don't have to leave the house to do this yourself, where possible.

You may have friends or family who can shop for you and drop items off for you or there are a number of NHS/ non-NHS volunteers offering this type of support locally – if you are in the "extremely vulnerable" category then consider registering with the Government for support with your shopping and your local council will offer you specific support with your shopping: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable

Get coronavirus support as an extremely vulnerable person

Related content

Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to

Register if you have a medical condition that makes you extremely vulnerable to coronavirus. For example, you'll be able to ask for help getting deliveries of essential supplies like food.

If you're not sure whether your medical condition makes you extremely vulnerable, register anyway.

You can register yourself, or on behalf of someone else.

Start now >

If you need help with food deliveries, please call the council and the numbers below:

If you live in North Islington: 020 7527 4075
If you live in central Islington: 020 7527 8157
If you live in South Islington: 020 7527 3788

If you live in Camden, you can register for emergency food packages here: https://www.camden.gov.uk/emergency-food-packages-covid19-/-coranavirus-?inheritRedirect=true

There are also several charities available to help, for more details please see the COVID resources pack for your borough.

As of 31st July, the availability of some support services may change.

NHS Volunteer Responders are available for help with food, pharmacy and medication needs – they can also offer a friendly chat with someone new. Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm) to arrange volunteer support. This will remain available after 1st August 2020.





- 2. Think about how you can get prescriptions delivered to your home. Ask your pharmacist, GP or consider using some of these services:
 - Diabetes.co.uk prescription service: https://www.diabetes.co.uk/eps or
 - https://codapharmacy.co.uk/NHSPrescription
 - https://www.pharmacy2u.co.uk/prescriptions/electronic-prescription-service-nhs
- 3. Continue to look after your health in all ways possible. This includes taking up regular, daily exercise at home, creating a routine for yourself at home with regards to activities and meals, eating healthily and minimising snacking, continuing to "attend" any virtual or telephone outpatient appointments that may have been arranged for you. Don't let your health routines slide because this will keep you healthy and well during this important time.
- 4. Look after your emotional wellbeing too. This includes taking regular breaks if you are working from home and/or caring for parents, a partner or young people. Also making time for yourself and doing a "self-care check in" you can ask yourself "what is one kind thing I can do for myself today?" or promise to spend 15-30 minutes doing something nice for yourself.

Here are some other ways of looking after your emotional wellbeing:

Create a daily routine for your time at home. Have regular wake/ sleep / meal/ break/ social (virtual) interaction times. Plan what you'd like to do achieve each day (e.g. work tasks, housework), include planning for fun activities like watching television, listening to music/ radio/ a podcast/ a TED talk, gardening, cooking, reading, physical activity, playing games, chatting to a friend on the phone or to a family member you share your household with.

Find interesting things to do online. You could create a change of scenery (in a different space at home/ garden if possible) and try something virtual. For instance:

- Online museum tours https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en
- The National Theatre offer free theatre showings online via their YouTube channel at 7pm on Thursdays: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUDq1XzCY0NIOYVJvEMQjqw
- Online social activities: Pop-up painting offer weekly online events for anyone anywhere in the world https://popuppainting.com/live/ this involves a social element to painting via Zoom from your own personal space. The national theatre and other platforms also offer online quizzes and games: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJQ160k_VN4
- Virtual Zoos: https://www.chesterzoo.org/virtual-zoo/
- Virtual Aquariums: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCO5q5atAVIkBwthxgTpxDog





Introduce mindfulness meditations into your day. Here are some examples:

- Weekly free mindfulness sessions and others courses available via the Oxford Mindfulness Centre: https://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/learn-mindfulness/online-sessions-podcasts/
- Live online mindfulness classes with Women and Health counselling service: https://www.womenandhealth.org.uk/live-online-mindfulness-class-for-women-on-tuesday-5th-may/
- 15-minute guided meditation- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fz57mdSPgMI&t=1s
- 12 free guided meditation websites https://www.heromovement.net/blog/free-guided-meditation-resources/
- Sounds and thoughts mindfulness meditation -https://soundcloud.com/hachetteaudiouk/meditation-5-sounds-and-thoughts
- Mindful movement meditation https://soundcloud.com/hachetteaudiouk/mindful-movement-meditation
- Mindful breathing https://soundcloud.com/icoperelaxationexercises/sets/relaxation-and-meditation-exercises
- Other free mindfulness meditations: http://franticworld.com/free-meditations-from-mindfulness/

If mindfulness or meditation is not for you then that's ok! Try a relaxation exercise instead. Here are some examples:

- Diaphragmatic breathing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BckGYBfN5e0
- Relaxation and breathing exercises with Headspace https://www.headspace.com/work/covid-19
- Calm natural sounds https://www.calmsound.com/

Take up learning something new:

- Learn a language for free with Duolingo https://www.duolingo.com/
- Learn to write a song/ create music https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z3dqhyc/articles/zrx3vk7
- Access a range of free online courses here https://www.futurelearn.com/ and https://thecrashcourse.com/
- Take up an Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award (iDEA) challenge https://idea.org.uk/
- Learn to program your own interactive stories, games, and animations herehttps://scratch.mit.edu/about and https://blockly.games

Keep active!

- Visit the Sports Health England website for various home work-based workoutshttps://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout#get_active_at_home
- Also visit the NHS website for workouts: https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/move-more/home-workout-videos/





- Moving medicine is a website that includes some helpful guides about physical activity for various health conditions: https://movingmedicine.ac.uk/consultation-guides/patient-info-finder/?p=adult&c=type-2-diabetes
- Visit https://weareundefeatable.co.uk/ an organisation that offers advice for people with physical health conditions who want to get more active personal stories are combined with practical advice
- Consider seated exercises if you want less intensive physical activity: https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/sitting-exercises/
- Visit https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/p087wddm for other gentle exercises
- Consider mindful yoga via Yoga Nidra app https://deps.apple.com/gb/app/yoga-nidra-relaxation-lite/id444707986; via Women and Health counselling service's weekly yoga schedule https://www.womenandhealth.org.uk/30853-2/; via Youtube videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYoDdUijY8 and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEImyy_kwN0; or via the Down Dog app (this includes a free trial; some paid features on offer at discounted prices and some free options for students, teachers and healthcare workers)
- Join The Body Coach Joe Wickes' daily PE sessions https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAxW1XT0iEJo0TYIRfn6rYQ

Don't spend too much time watching the news. Try to limit yourself to two or three news updates a day only and make sure that these are from trusted sources such as the government, NHS and/ or charity websites like diabetes UK. Think about other ways to manage or think about the COVID situations - Dr Russ Harris, author of The Happiness offers how **'FACE** COVID' Trap tips on to and respond effectively: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_O8grFdwMDuGVIE_RvdRfhHhf6xf3tY8/view?fbclid=lwAR1i ZbhDZgB5MxX6kdRQVM4finmCz-MVx45g5Ffj4on5RTaTiZvFj7oYBlo

Try to wind down before bedtime to have a good night's sleep. Reduce stress and boost your immune system with plenty of down time, especially in the evening whilst winding down for sleep. Have a warm drink rather than alcohol and avoid looking at news reports in the evenings – instead wind down by watching or reading something entertaining or by talking to friends.

If you find yourself worrying a great deal, remind yourself that you are an expert in your health condition, and you know how to look after yourself. Remind yourself that worrying thoughts are just thoughts not facts and thoughts will pass. Bring yourself into the present moment where everything is calm, noticing everything around you and slow your breathing. Then, when you are ready, carry on with what you were doing.

Make time to play games and puzzles either alone, with children/ friends/ partners or other family members - https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/category/play-and-win/games/ or https://www.sporcle.com/





Listen to a TED talk https://www.ted.com/

Or a podcast

If you have a garden and children or young people, consider some adventure activities that involve the outdoors with them - https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/kids-nature-activities-self-isolation/

Visit websites that focus on how to promote good wellbeing:

- Mind Charity https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/
- Mental Health Foundation charity -https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak
- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/2020/28-february-coronavirus-anxiety-how-to-cope-if-you-re-feeling-anxious-about-the-outbreak/
- Happiful Magazine https://happiful.com/coronavirus-ways-to-help/
- World Health Organisation coping with stress poster -https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a_2
- World Health Organisation helping children to cope with stress poster -https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf?sfvrsn=f3a063ff 2

Consider reaching out and socialising via online communities linked to your health condition or your mood. For instance Diabetes UK has the following online communities and support networks:

<u>Volunteer-run local groups</u>: There are a number of these across London. Diabetes UK are also able to set up any new groups if there are willing volunteers to run them! London groups are listed here:

https://www.diabetes.org.uk/in_your_area/london/local-groups/listing_of_local_groups

Online Forums: Diabetes UK's support forum is an online community where you can exchange knowledge and experiences with other people with diabetes, including family members and carers:

https://www.diabetes.org.uk/how we help/community/diabetes-support-forum

<u>Diabetes UK London region Facebook page</u>:

https://www.facebook.com/LondonRegionDiabetesUK





Other online communities include:

<u>Diabetics with eating disorders (DWEDs):</u> an organisation that offers support via Facebook and other social media platforms, for those dealing with eating disorders and (mainly) Type 1 diabetes - http://dwed.org.uk

<u>Circle D:</u> Facebook and Twitter support group for (mainly) 18-30s with diabetes of any type. Kent local meet ups, 'rant room' & other places where Circle D groups have developed. 'You are not alone' is their motto: www.facebook.com/circledrocks/ Twitter: @circled

<u>Great Britain Diabetes Online Community (The GBDOC):</u> This community offers 24/7 discussions, conversations and support, including weekly 'tweetchat' focussing on a particular topic. https://m.facebook.com/groups/thegbdoc/ Twitter: @thegbdoc

Ask if you feel you need more help! If you feel you need some psychological support or help during the COVID19 pandemic then talk to your GP or medical team.

Please note that some services are offering reduced services or suspended services during the COVID-19 pandemic, however iCope are offering brief psychological support for people who in the 'vulnerable' and 'extremely vulnerable' groups: https://www.icope.nhs.uk/

We hope you have found this range of coping tips and techniques helpful! They only work to help you relieve the COVID-19 related stress in your bucket if you use them so please make sure you do.

Remember, you are an expert in your health condition, and you know how to look after yourself. Take care, stay safe and seek advice from your GP or medical team if needed – be sure to let them know if you have any issues or concerns during this time.

Wishing you all the best for now!

Diabetes and COVID-19 resources

Diabetes UK: https://www.diabetes.org.uk/

Diabetes UK helpline number & email for any concerns or worries you may have about your diabetes: Phone: 0345 123 2399 Email helpline@diabetes.org.uk
This helpline is open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 6pm, and is connected to an NHS helpline so you can also ask clinical questions and diabetes nurse specialists or doctors can advise.





Diabetes UK 'Information Prescriptions' with tips on how to self-manage your diabetes: https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/managing-your-diabetes/information-prescriptions

Diabetes UK Learning Zone delivers videos, quizzes, information and more. This is all tailored to you once you have registered and shared some information about your diabetes. All Learning Zone material and courses are completely free: https://learningzone.diabetes.org.uk/

Diabetes UK guides and resources:

Staying home and managing your diabetes: https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/managing-your-diabetes/staying-home

Staying home and managing your diabetes free printed leaflet:

https://shop.diabetes.org.uk/collections/information-for-you/products/staying-at-home-and-managing-diabetes

Sick day rules for people with diabetes and COVID-19:

https://www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/Life-with-diabetes/Illness

The NHS England guidance for sick day rules and type 2 diabetes:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2020/04/3.-Covid-19-Type-2-Sick-Day-Rules-Crib-Sheet-06042020.pdf

Diabetes UK translated resources:

15 Healthcare essentials (translated versions available) – the 15 checks that we believe people with diabetes should receive to ensure they stay well: https://shop.diabetes.org.uk/products/15-healthcare-essentials

Food guides (including South Asian, African & African Caribbean guides): https://shop.diabetes.org.uk/collections/booklets-leaflets/products/enjoy-food-guides

Translated Ramadan factsheets: https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/managing-your-diabetes/ramadan#factsheets

'What is diabetes' factsheet in Bengali: https://diabetes-resources-production.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/diabetes-

storage/migration/pdf/0516A%2520Language%2520Factsheet%2520Update%2520V5% 25201_5_15%2520SR_Bengali.pdf

Translated pages about diabetes: https://www.diabetes.org.uk/diabetes-the-basics/information-in-different-languages

NHS and/ or charity-reviewed apps or online resources to support people with diabetes:

FoodSwitch (iOS & Android): app to support making healthy food choices: http://www.actiononsalt.org.uk/foodswitch/index.html





iPrescribe Exercise (iOS & Android): an app developed by physiotherapists that creates a 12-week exercise plan based on health information entered by the user. It helps to improve overall health, along with managing a number of long-term health conditions through physical activity. For more information visit: https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/iprescribe-exercise/.

MyType1Diabetes website: For adults with Type 1 diabetes. Includes videos and eLearning courses, to help people understand more about Type 1 diabetes and increase confidence in how to manage it: myType1diabetes.nhs.uk.

My Sugr (iOS and Android): an app that allows users to complete a digital logbook that can help with diabetes management. It can track blood sugars, record carbohydrate intake, estimate HbA1c and much more. For more information visit: https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/mysugr/.

Livia Healthcare app (iOS & Android): an app to help manage conditions such as diabetes, obesity and heart problems, and make lifestyle changes using self-monitoring. For more information visit: https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/liva-uk/.

Digibete app and website (iOS & Android): For children and young people with Type 1 diabetes and their families. The app and website includes a wide range of awareness, education, training and support resources: https://www.digibete.org/digibete-app/.

- JDRF or the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation the type1 Diabetes charity- Living with Type 1 and Covid-19: https://jdrf.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-people-living-with-type-1-diabetes/
 - InDependent DiabetesTrust (IDDT) charity for supporting people living with diabetes run by people living with diabetes: https://www.iddt.org
 - Diabetes self-management education courses are offered locally as part of diabetes care. While some group courses have been disrupted, it may be helpful to look on the following websites for updates and any other online resources available – courses usually give information about living well with diabetes, and give people the chance to meet and share experiences with others with diabetes:

X-PERT (Type 2): www.xperthealth.org.uk
DESMOND: (Type 2): www.desmond-project.org.uk
DAFNE: (Type 1): www.dafne.uk.com

 NHS England Diabetes Covid-19 key Information (sick day rules): https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/london-clinical-networks/our-networks/diabetes/diabetes-covid-19-key-information/





- Type 1 diabetes collection of resources including blogs, experiences and discussions between people living with diabetes: http://www.t1resources.uk/resources/all-resources
- 'My diabetes my way' NHS Scotland-wide interactive website to help support people with who have diabetes and their family and friends: https://www.mydiabetesmyway.scot.nhs.uk
 - Talking about diabetes (TAD): a website for people living with diabetes aimed at showcasing peoples' inspiring stories to generate discussion about innovation and new technologies through shared experiences: http://talkingaboutdiabetes.co.uk/about-us/
 - Diabetes research and wellness foundation: https://www.drwf.org.uk/
- International Diabetes federation: https://www.idf.org/aboutdiabetes/what-is-diabetes/covid-19-and-diabetes.html

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