

Visiting a loved one

My family member is approaching the end of their life, can I visit them?

If you or someone in your household has symptoms of coronavirus, you won't be able to visit other people. GOV.UK and the NHS have advice on what you should do, including self-isolation.

The government has introduced new rules on staying at home and away from others which may affect whether you're able to visit someone. These rules may change over the next weeks and months, please check GOV.UK for the most up to date information.

If you're providing care for a vulnerable person or helping them with food and medication, these rules don't apply to you and you can still visit them (unless you or someone in your household has symptoms of coronavirus, in which case you should self-isolate).

The government rules on staying at home don't list visiting someone who is dying as a reason to leave the house. However, we don't feel that these rules are intended to stop people saying goodbye when someone is dying. It's important to think about the risks of visiting someone in terms of getting or spreading coronavirus. For example, you should consider whether there is any risk to yourself, to the person who is dying, or to anyone else, such as staff helping with their care or other family or friends.



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As much as possible, it's important to limit any risk of spreading coronavirus. Taking care to follow NHS advice on washing your hands and not coming into close contact with others is important.

Can I visit my family member in a care home, hospital or hospice?

If your loved one is staying in a care home, hospital or hospice, there might be restrictions on visitors. These restrictions can change quite quickly. Be sure to check directly with the organisation concerned. If visiting is restricted, think about ways you can share information and updates about your loved one with other family members.

I can't visit someone who is dying. What can I do?

If you aren't able to visit someone in their last weeks or days of life, you may find this very upsetting. It's a very difficult situation to be in. Try to remember that this is not your fault. It may be the best way to reduce the risk of other people getting coronavirus.

- Other family and friends may be able to visit them and keep you up to date by phone, text or social media.
- It may be possible to phone the person – you may be able to talk to them or read to them.
- You could also send a message, letter, gift or a card.



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- You can also try other forms of communication such as video calls, Skype etc. If someone else is seeing your loved one, such as a family member or a carer, you could ask if they can help with the phone or video call.
- Even if your loved one isn't able to communicate, they may still be able to hear your voice on the phone.
- You may have lots of different feelings about not being able to see them. It might help to talk to someone about this, like a family member or friend.

I am allowed to visit the person who is dying but am not sure if I ought to?

Following the general government advice on seeing other people less can help protect your loved one.

But it is their choice whether they follow it. Some people who are likely to die in the coming weeks or months may decide that they want to see their family and friends, even if they risk getting coronavirus and becoming seriously ill or dying with it. This is a very personal decision. It's also a decision that will affect other family members and friends.

It might be helpful to talk with your family and consider some of the following issues:

- What are the options?
- What are the pros and cons of any decisions?
- How does the person feel about the situation?
- How do you and other family or friends feel about the situation?



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- Are there ways they can reduce their risk of getting coronavirus? For example, following NHS advice on handwashing or limiting the time spent with them.
- What is right for them?
- Thinking through different things that could happen in the future, how would you feel about your decision?
- Would anyone else be put at risk, including you.

You and they may be able to get advice from the health care professionals who are supporting you.

The following websites offer useful information and advice:

- Government Covid-19 guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection - <https://standre.ws/Gov-covid19>
- Government Full Guidance on Staying at Home and Away from Others - <https://standre.ws/GovStayatHome>
- NHS advice, including for those classed as vulnerable - <https://standre.ws/NHSCovid-19>

