Cabinet Office

COVID-19: Our autumn and winter plan

easy read

Contents

In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

Some words are blue and underlined. These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction

This autumn and winter we plan to help people stay safe from **COVID-19** by providing services and giving guidance.

COVID-19 is also called Coronavirus. It is an illness that is spreading around the world. It can affect your lungs and breathing.

Because most people have had the COVID-19 **vaccine**, it is now safer for people to go back to work and meet up with their friends and family.
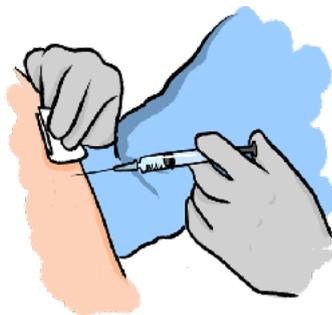
A **vaccine** is an injection or jab that helps to stop you being ill with a certain illness.

The amount of COVID-19 in England was high at the beginning of July, but was much lower by the end of the July. It is now slowly rising again.

Our plan

We plan to help people stay safe by:

- offering people vaccines and other treatments.

- asking people who have caught COVID-19 to stay indoors, away from other people for 10 days.

- helping the NHS and care services to manage the extra work.

- giving people advice on how to keep themselves safe.

- working to stop people from carrying COVID-19 in from other countries by:

  - helping other countries to vaccinate their people.

  - having rules for people who are coming into the UK from other countries.

A difficult winter

Winter is always a difficult time for the NHS. As well as COVID-19, we think that more people will get ill from flu this year.

We will keep a watch on these illnesses and, if things get worse, we may have to do other things to keep people safe.

Vaccines and other treatments

Vaccines

Vaccines are the best way to keep people safe from being seriously ill with COVID-19.

Most people over age 16 have had the vaccine but there are still many people who have not had it.

People should have all the needed jabs of the vaccine to be safest.

This winter we want to:

- encourage people who have not yet had a jab to get vaccinated.

- offer an extra third jab to people who are most likely to be seriously ill if they catch COVID-19.

  This is called a booster.

- offering a first vaccine to children aged 12 to 15.

If you have been close to someone who has COVID-19

People who have not had the vaccine still have to stay inside away from other people if they have been close to anyone who has COVID-19.

People who have had the vaccine do not have to do this unless they test positive for COVID-19.

If you have been abroad

If you have had the vaccine in the UK, you do not have to stay indoors, away from anyone else if you come back from certain countries.

Travelling abroad

In many countries, you can only do certain things if you have had the vaccine.

You can prove that you have had the vaccine by showing the **NHS COVID Pass**.

The **NHS COVID Pass** is either on your phone or you can print it out onto paper. It shows that you have had the vaccine.

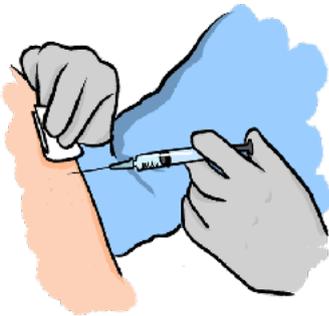Over 60 countries will use the NHS COVID Pass when they check to see if you have had the vaccine.

Making it easier to get a jab

We are giving money to local councils to make it easier for people to get the vaccine.

Booster

Like other vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccine gets weaker over time, especially in older people.

So we plan to give older people and some other people an extra booster jab this autumn.

This will help to keep them as safe as possible.

Other treatment

There are now some new medicines and treatments which help people who become ill with COVID-19.

We have checked that these new medicines and treatments are safe.

The NHS is now starting to use them. This will mean that fewer people will need to go into hospital if they catch COVID-19.

We are working with doctors and scientists to find more and better medicines and treatments for COVID-19.

Test, trace and isolate

It is important that people who may have COVID-19 do not spread the illness to other people.

We want people who think they may have COVID-19 to take a **PCR test**.

A **PCR test** is the best test for checking if you have COVID-19. It is free.
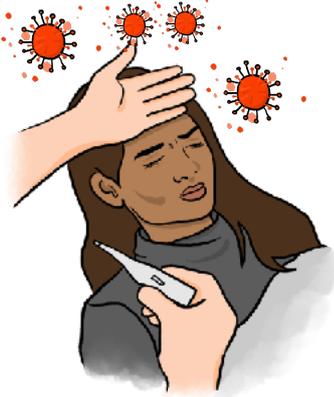
If you have caught COVID-19

If the test says that you have COVID-19, you must isolate - this means you should stay indoors, away from other people for 10 days. This is the law.

People who don't think they have COVID-19

Many people who have caught COVID-19 do not feel ill at all.

They may not realise that they have COVID-19.

But they can still spread the illness and make other people seriously ill.

Testing people who don't think they have COVID-19

We have been testing people who don't think they have COVID-19 with a quick and easy test called lateral flow or LFD.

The lateral flow tests (LFD) are free.

These tests find many of the people who have caught COVID-19.

They have to stay indoors away from other people.

This is stopping them from spreading the illness to other people and making them seriously ill.

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The NHS COVID-19 app

We want people to carry on using the NHS COVID-19 **app**.

An **app** is a computer programme that you put on your phone or tablet.

The NHS COVID-19 app:

- tells you if you have been close to someone who has COVID-19.
- helps us trace how COVID-19 is spreading.

If the app says you have been close to someone with COVID-19, you should get a PCR test to see if you have caught it.

The government will carry on helping people who have to stay indoors and away from others because of COVID-19. But we will decide if this is still needed in March 2022.

Helping the NHS and care services

The government is giving the NHS more money to help them cope with the extra work caused by COVID-19.

We are also looking at how to keep patients and staff safe from COVID-19 in the NHS.

Long COVID

Long COVID is where people are still ill from COVID-19 for more than 12 weeks.

The government is giving money to doctors to look into why some people are ill for a long time with COVID-19.
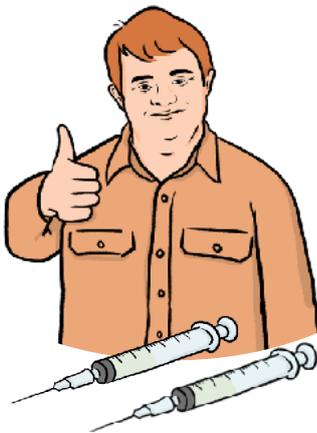
The NHS is doing more to help people with long COVID.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people

Clinically extremely vulnerable people were people who were thought more likely to be seriously ill if they caught COVID-19.

When COVID-19 started, we said that they should stay indoors away from other people.

Most clinically extremely vulnerable people have now had all their doses of the vaccine. Since July they have been able to follow the same advice as everyone else.
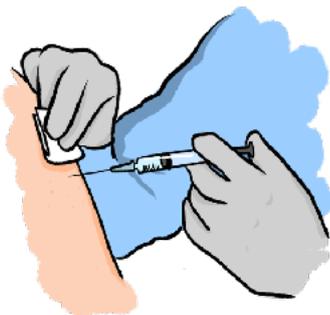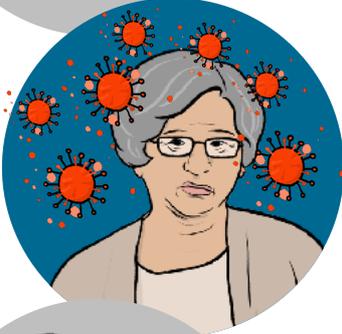
The booster jab

We are offering a third dose of the vaccine to clinically extremely vulnerable people. This is called a booster jab.

Adult social care

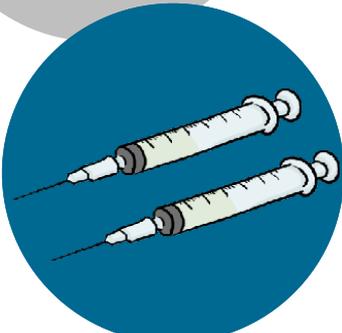The government continues to give guidance to care homes about:

- keeping people safe.

- what to do if people in the home catch COVID-19.

- testing people for COVID-19.

People who live in care homes can now have as many visitors as they wish.

The government has been giving more money to adult social care to help to keep people safe from COVID-19.

From November, all staff working in care homes must have had all the needed doses of the vaccine.

Vaccine against flu

The government wants as many people as possible to get vaccinated against flu this winter.

This year you can get a free flu vaccine if you are:

- a child at primary school or secondary school.

- aged 50 or over.
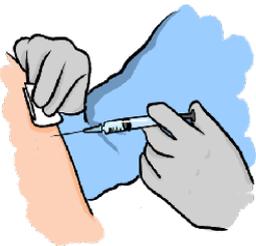
- someone who is vulnerable.

- a pregnant woman.

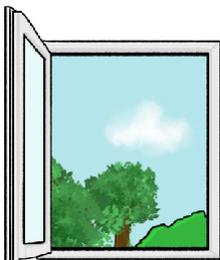# Giving people advice on how to keep themselves safe

The government will carry on giving people advice based on the latest information from doctors and scientists.

Things you should do

The best way to keep safe from COVID-19 is to be fully vaccinated.

Other ways to help to keep people safe are:

- If you are meeting indoors, open the windows and doors to let fresh air in. Meeting outdoors is safer.

- Wear a face covering if you are meeting other people indoors that you don't normally meet.

- Get tested if you think you have COVID-19.

- If you feel ill, you should stay indoors and get a free PCR test.

- If the test says you have caught COVID-19, you must stay indoors away from other people.

- Try to stay at home if you feel unwell.

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser regularly.

- Download the NHS COVID-19 app so you know if you have been close to anyone who has had COVID-19.
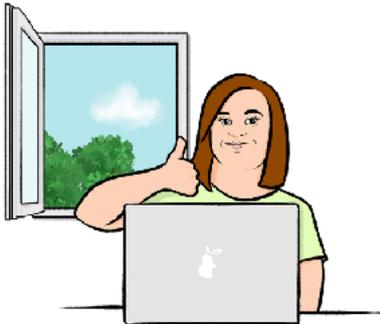
Businesses

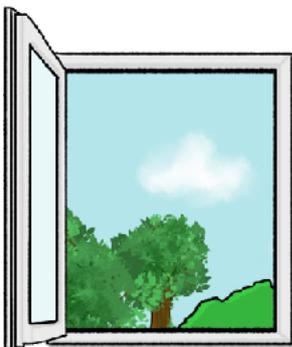The government is giving separate guidance for businesses.

Businesses must not ask workers to come in to work if they should be staying indoors and away from other people.
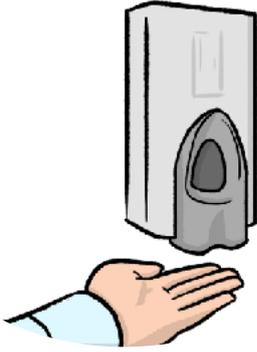
Businesses should:

- ask workers to stay at home if they are not well.

- make sure there is lots of fresh air in indoor places.

- provide hand sanitiser and clean surfaces.

- have the NHS **QR code** on display so that customers can use their phone and the NHS COVID-19 app to check-in.

  A **QR code** is a square of dots that send a message to your phone.

- think about asking people to show the NHS COVID-pass.

Working with the rest of the world

Travellers

We want to prevent people bringing COVID-19 when they travel into the UK.

The traffic light system

We have put certain countries you should not go to on the red list.

There are different rules for travellers from countries on the red list.

Helping to vaccinate the world

We need to reduce the amount of COVID-19 in other countries.

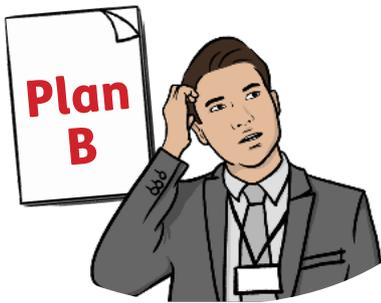Many of the poorer countries have not been able to buy enough doses of the vaccine for their people.

So we are giving many millions of doses of the vaccine to different countries around the world.
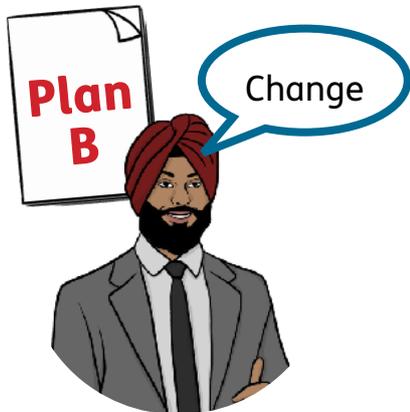
Plan A and Plan B

This document explains Plan A.

But things may not go well if COVID-19 cases go up a lot and we might have to change what we are doing to keep people safe.

It is best that we are ready if things go badly. So we have also written a Plan B.
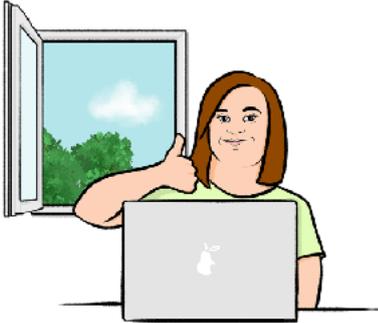
Plan B

If COVID-19 does not stay under control, and a lot of people are going into hospital with serious illness, we will:

- talk to the country about a change in plan.

- say that you can only go to certain places if you have had all the needed doses of the vaccine.
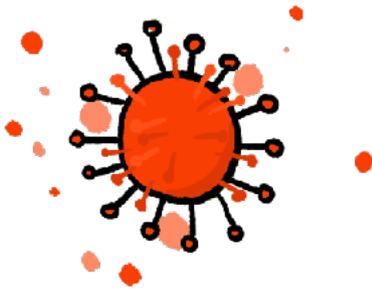
- make people wear face coverings by law in some places.

We may also ask people to work from home.

New types of COVID-19

COVID-19 is changing all the time. There are new types of COVID-19 being found. Some of these can make people seriously ill and spread more quickly.

Our doctors and scientists are watching out for any new types of COVID-19.

They are working on new vaccines and treatments that would help to keep people safe from any new versions of the illness.

Making plans with local councils

Local councils work hard to keep people healthy locally.

We will carry on working with local councils to deal with any new outbreaks of COVID-19.

We are making plans with local councils to deal with new types of COVID-19 that may appear locally.

The law

When COVID-19 first appeared, parliament passed a law that included many of the rules we had to keep people safe.

We have now finished with most of the rules.

We have changed the law so these rules do not have to be followed anymore.

But there are still a few rules in the law that people must follow.

We plan to keep these rules in the law until March 2022.

For more information

If you need more information please go to:

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

This Easy Read information has been produced by easy-read-online.co.uk