

# WOODBRIIDGE EMERGENCY RESPONSE GROUP GUIDANCE

## CURRENT PUBLISHED ADVICE

### Should I go outside?

**If the government has sent** you a letter to say you are in the 'clinically extremely vulnerable' category. You have a heightened risk of death or complications if you catch coronavirus. Government advice is to not go out and to socially distance from those you live with. If you live with someone who has received one - go out only when it is crucial to living.

**For everyone else you must be alert to the risk of catching coronavirus by any interaction with others outside.**

All workers should work at home unless they are required to go to their workplace. In going to your workplace you should avoid, where possible, travel by public transport. If you have to use public transport you must rigorously maintain social distancing and try to travel off peak.

When you leave your home minimise potential exposure to coronavirus by limiting the number of contacts you have and the length of time with them.

Acceptable reasons for being outside your home include:

- travelling to and from work,
- shopping for essentials,
- collecting medication,
- visiting a doctor,
- exercise,
- undertaking outdoor sport activity with members of your household,
- driving to and visiting outdoor open spaces,
- walking pets, and
- volunteering to help others.

**Do not use playgrounds, outdoor gyms, or ticketed outdoor leisure facilities.**

Where possible go out alone. Shop in bulk, avoid busy periods. Take exercise routes with wide pavements/paths. You may stop outdoors to answer the phone, read a book, sunbathe or picnic but maintain social distancing. If you are a jogger/runner or cyclist do this activity locally, give wide berth to others and try to limit your activity to wide open spaces. Recent research shows that these activities leave a *plume of breathe aerosol well beyond 2m behind you.*

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Outside a work environment you may meet up with only one person who is not in your household. This must be outside your property boundary, must not involve team sport and you must maintain social distancing at all times. Try to be side by side with them not face to face.

**Bear in mind at all times that if even mild symptoms appear you must not leave your house for at least 7 days** and not before the symptoms stop. If someone in your household starts to have symptoms do not leave the house for 14 days. Symptoms include: a dry cough, raised temperature, a new loss of taste/smell, difficulty breathing, fever or high temperature. You will not know you have caught the virus for up to fourteen days. Symptoms do not appear immediately, and you can be infectious before they appear.

## Should I wear a mask or face covering?

You are advised by the British government to use a face covering in enclosed public spaces such as on public transport and in shops. Do not fit them to children under 2, unassisted primary school children or those with respiratory problems.

Masks have two possible benefits; they can prevent the wearer catching coronavirus (**infection control**). They can also prevent the wearer passing on coronavirus (**transmission control**).

**Infection control:** The people who really need masks for this purpose are health workers and carers.

**Transmission control:** The idea of this is to reduce the potential for you to spread coronavirus.

Home-made/improvised cloth masks and face coverings only act as a transmission control in some circumstances. They may help you to reduce the risk of passing on coronavirus to others.

WHO says that even disposable surgical masks made to international standards have limited benefit for infection control. The government requires these to be reserved for those that need them in care homes and NHS.

Purchase and use of **N95/FFP3 infection control masks** which have active filters is **strongly discouraged**. These are in short supply and are crucial to safeguard medical staff for attending to known COVID infected patients.

Masks can become uncomfortable. Do not touch the outer surface as the outer surface of a mask can be contaminated by coronavirus. Wash any

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home-made/improvised cloth mask/face covering at a minimum 60°C after every visit to a public enclosed space.

When you wear a mask don't forget it is still essential to maintain social distance and wash your hands frequently as this will aid in protecting you.

## When should I wear disposable gloves?

Disposable gloves protect clean hands from contamination from bacteria and viruses. They will become contaminated if you touch a contaminated surface. **They are only appropriate** to wear for performing tasks over a short period where you are regularly picking up or carrying things that other people will have touched.

**They are inappropriate** to wear where you are for example driving and handling medication, handling food packaging, touching doors, gates, light switches etc because you are briefly touch a **large range** of surfaces which may have been touched by others. In those instances it is recommended you remain bare handed, but regularly and properly clean your hands with sanitizer gel or soap and water.

## Can coronavirus live on my clothes?

**There is currently some evidence that coronavirus can be transmitted from fabrics.** Experts advise you wash clothes worn outside regularly.

It is a good idea to keep a box for outdoor clothes by the entrance to your home. On entry take your shoes off and put handbag, mobile phone, coat or other outer clothes in the box and then go to the sink. Wash your hands thoroughly, come back from the sink and use disinfectant or alcohol wipes on any outdoor stuff that you want to take inside like your mobile phone. Leave the rest or wash them. It is currently unknown how long coronavirus will survive on fabrics.

## Which cleaning products should I use?

Use bleach with at least 0.5% sodium hypochlorite or 70% alcohol sanitizer, to disinfect "high touch points" - commonly handled objects such as car and house door handles, bell pushes, door knockers keys, steering wheels, gear knobs, touch screens, mobile phones, cupboard doors, railings and light switches between outside doors and your handwashing sink.

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**Most disinfectant wipes and sprays are only effective if the surface stay wet for a few minutes.** Expert advice is liquid soap and a wipe-down are as good as any expensive products.

For clothes washing use standard products but where possible use a minimum 60°C wash. For washes below 60°C use a disinfecting laundry cleanser. Do not shake the clothes before washing.

## How long can coronavirus live on different types of surfaces?

Based on a recent study for SARS coronavirus published in the New England Journal of Medicine the answers are:

- plastic – 3 days
- stainless steel – 2 days
- cardboard – 8 hours to 1 day

Do not try to remember when these were last touched. Develop a mind-set that everything, everyone, everywhere is contaminated with bacteria and viruses. It just means you need to keep washing your hands or using sanitizer gel with a minimum of 70% alcohol content. Do this meticulously at least every two hours and additionally after touching any “high touch points”.

## Can a dog or cat transfer coronavirus on their fur?

World Health Organisation (WHO) says, *“there is no evidence that companion animals/pets such as dogs or cats can be infected with the new coronavirus”*.

Latest advice suggest transfer from fur may be possible **but a low risk**. The British Veterinary Association recommends cats should be keep inside where the owner has been advised to shield themselves. Dogs should be bathed more regularly. We recommend you do not stroke domestic animals.

## Can I catch coronavirus from postal items?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states the likelihood of contamination on goods **is low** and the risk of catching coronavirus from a package that has been moved, travelled, and been exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low because of the nature of the delivery process. To be extra cautious a wipe down of the exterior with liquid soap or disinfectant wipe would reduce the risk.

## Do I need to wash my or other’s groceries?

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The NHS says: *“It’s very unlikely [coronavirus] can be spread through things like packages or food.”* Disposing of any packaging and washing your hands thoroughly after handling groceries is advisory. You are more likely to be exposed to coronavirus by entering a shop with other people present than from the handling of any packaging.

You can reduce your possible exposure to coronavirus by getting groceries delivered and having your order left outside rather than going to the supermarket. Deliveries in cardboard boxes are preferable to those in reused plastic boxes as the latter cannot be easily be cleaned to remove bacteria or viruses. Shops in Woodbridge delivering groceries and other items are listed on <https://www.woodbridgecovidinfo.co.uk/food/>

## Can I catch coronavirus from takeaway food?

Professor Bill Keevil, Professor of Environmental Health at the University of Southampton, says *“it’s very low risk”*, adding *“if food is heated and cooked, there’s absolutely no danger at all”*. The Food Standards Agency currently states that *“it is very unlikely that you can catch coronavirus from food”*.

When it comes to the packaging, *“if those preparing your food are following all the guidance for good food hygiene, that should be sufficient”*.

Takeaways and restaurants in Woodbridge providing food, for delivery or collection, are listed on: <https://www.woodbridgecovidinfo.co.uk/food/>

Woodbridge Emergency Support Group issue this advice for guidance only. It is for the reader to decide its adoption.