

MARINO MEDICAL ADVICE ON PROTECTING YOURSELF DURING THE COVID 2019 OUTBREAK

What is 'social-distancing' and how do I do it?

Social distancing means maintaining 1 metre or 3 feet away from other people everywhere that you go. This means shops, churches, pubs, funeral homes etc. This provides the best protection to avoid getting the virus if anyone close to you coughs or sneezes.

If you must cross this distance, to pay for things for example, preferentially use a tap card or if you only pay in cash ensure that you wash/sanitise your hands immediately following each transaction. Don't shake hands, it defeats the purpose entirely.

Self-quarantine – when WELL or you have NO symptoms

If you know that you have been in contact with a case of COVID 19 or you have been traveling abroad including to the UK in recent weeks, or you have a chronic condition or your immune system is suppressed or you are over 65 and are **well/have no symptoms** - you may want to self-quarantine. This means staying at home as much as possible. Work from home if possible, get someone to do your shopping for you and pick up prescriptions etc, don't use public transport, don't visit family or have them come visit you. If you need to leave home for any reason practice social-distancing. You can go out for walks but maintain 1m/3ft distance from other people and sanitise your hands particularly while away from home. See websites below for more information.

Self-isolation – if you have SYMPTOMS

If you have symptoms particularly of fever, cough or shortness of breath or symptoms similar to a cold (sore throat, sneezing, itchy eyes, new aches and pains), contact the practice by phone (DO NOT COME TO THE PRACTICE OR LEAVE YOUR HOUSE UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO). We will assess you over the phone to see if it's appropriate that you get tested for COVID19. The next thing to do is **self-isolate**. This means that you should stay indoors preferably as far away from other people as possible. Do not leave the house for any reason. If you live alone you can use the whole of your house, if not it is important to try protect the other people in your home (particularly elderly or people with chronic illnesses). Wash your hands regularly, use your own towel. Wear a mask if you have one. Cover your mouth if you sneeze or cough and dispose of the tissue immediately. Don't share any utensils if possible. If you share a bathroom, try to use it last after other people and clean it with disinfectant immediately after use. Clean room/rooms that you use with disinfectant daily. Check your symptoms if they are becoming worse contact the practice by phone again and if you are struggling to breathe it is important to call an ambulance if you feel that it is an emergency and inform the call taker that you are self-isolating. For more information on self-isolation including laundry and management of waste etc please see www.hse.ie and follow links to self-isolation advice.

Hand hygiene or washing hands

It is very important that you wash your hands regularly in soap and water or alcohol hand gel, particularly when you come home from being outside or after any contact with anyone. Spend about 20 secs washing them and ensure that all surfaces are covered, including under nails, sides and backs of hands and in between fingers.

Cough or sneeze etiquette and face touching

If you or anyone else needs to sneeze or cough, ensure that this is done in to a tissue or the crook of your elbow if none available. All tissues should be disposed of straight away. It is important to try not to touch your face and if you need to, wash/sanitise hands before and after.

For more information

www.hse.ie

www.hpsc.ie

www.who.int