

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

Help and advice for people aged 70 years +

Regional Public Health

HAUORA Ā IWI KI TE ŪPOKO • O TE IKA A MĀUI
Better health for the greater Wellington region

This fact sheet outlines important information to help our community stay safe and healthy during the COVID-19 response in New Zealand with particular reference for the health advice for over 70s.

To find up-to-date information:

- Ministry of Health website www.health.govt.nz
- Covid-19 website www.covid19.govt.nz

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a type of coronavirus. There are simple steps you can take to look after yourself.



Prevention and protecting yourself

The most important thing you can do is to avoid contracting COVID-19. Here are some simple tips to take to stop the spread of illnesses like COVID-19 and the flu:

- **Get your annual free flu vaccine.** You can do this at your GP or pharmacy. If you haven't heard from your GP about this already, please contact them.
- **Wash and dry hands regularly** for at least 20 seconds using water and soap. This is especially important after eating or preparing food, after using the bathroom, after coughing and sneezing, or blowing your nose and when you get home.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes** with your bent elbow or a tissue, then throw in bin.
- **Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes** unless you have washed your hands.
- **Stay away** from sneezes. Two metres is a safe distance to stay away.
- **If you feel at all unwell, make sure you stay at home** until you feel better and try to stay in a separate room from people you live with using common sense precautions to avoid close contact.
- **Seek medical help for all other existing and new medical conditions** - as soon as symptoms arise. It is important that you don't wait. Health clinics remain open. Please call ahead.
- **Follow the advice of your GP or specialist.** E.g. If you are taking immunosuppressive drugs we advise that you do not stop this medication without first consulting your GP or specialist.



Accessing food and essentials

It is still best to access services without leaving your homes if possible, things like internet shopping and deliveries will continue. When you do go out, practice social distancing (keeping 2 metres apart) and good hygiene (avoid touching surfaces, washing hands and keep you the good cough etiquette)



Keeping active

As always it's important to stay active. Fresh air each day is important. While exercising - it is important to keep your 2 metre distance from other people. If you are unwell, do not go outside.



Support available to you

It's important to remain connected, whether that be via phone or other messenger services with family and friends. Reach out to a trusted organisation if you need any help:

- If you're feeling unwell call your GP before you visit. Or call **Healthline 0800 358 5453 (free)**
- If you are in need of urgent assistance, contact **emergency services (dial 111)**.
- If you ever feel unsafe you can call, email or text the Elder Abuse Helpline 0800 326 6865 or text 5032, or email support@elderabuse.nz – 24 hours service answered by registered nurses who can connect you to local specialist providers
- For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can **call or text 1737** – free, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – to talk with a trained counsellor.
- Not sure who to contact for help? Call the government helpline on 0800 779 997 (8am–1am)
- Other Helplines **Wellington Region COVID-19 helpline on 0800 141 967**, (9am-5pm)
Age Concern: 04-801 9338, Salvation Army +64 4 802 6269 or the Samaritans 0800 726 666
- Your local council, church and community centre



Here is a reminder of COVID-19 symptoms and how it spreads

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a type of coronavirus. There are simple steps you can take to protect you and your family/whānau.

COVID-19 symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu and include a cough, high temperature, shortness of breath, sore throat, sneezing and runny nose or temporary loss of smell.

COVID-19, like the flu, can be spread from person to person.

- Through the air by coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes