

Coronavirus & ED

We are sure you have all heard of Coronavirus. COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways.

We would like to share with you the advice given by the NHS and National Eczema Society (NES).

Symptoms of coronavirus:

a cough

a high temperature

shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

How to avoid catching or spreading coronavirus:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean



Coronavirus and ED:

We have received a number of enquiries about the advice on frequent handwashing and use of hand sanitisers to reduce coronavirus risk.

Handwashing is the best way to reduce transmission of coronavirus and washing your hands with water and your usual emollient soap substitute should be adequate. Emollient helps remove the virus from your hands during the washing process and serves the same cleansing purpose as soap.

When you are out and about, we recommend that you continue to use emollient to wash your hands (decant a small amount into a pump dispenser or pot and refresh daily) and re-apply your emollient afterwards. If you feel you need to use sanitising gel (which may irritate your eczema), apply your usual emollient afterwards to minimise any irritant effect. There is no eczema-friendly hand sanitiser, as they all contain alcohol, which dries out the skin.

In public places where you can't avoid touching surfaces, try not to touch your nose, eyes or mouth (or your child's) because the virus gets in through mucous membranes.

There is a possibility of increased risk of chest infection/pneumonia from Covid-19, specifically for people with HED. The flow of mucous is different for those with ED. Respiratory tract infections are a common symptom in general, so it would be sensible for people with HED who have had serious chest infections at any stage (either as young children or as adults) to take COVID-19 seriously and act

on the general advice about minimising risk of infection. We advise you use a humidifier at night along with a fan to help keep you cool (and air con if you have it).

The other difficulty with COVID-19 and ED will be temperature issues, due to one of the symptoms being a high temperature. Please remember to continue to act on all cooling methods and products you currently use.



If your child is in nursery, preschool or junior school, please speak with their teacher to discuss leaving your child's cream in an easily accessible place and for the teacher to encourage them to apply it after they have been to the cloakroom. Or, if your child is able to do this themselves, speak with the school to ensure they are allowed to have this with them throughout the day.

Please reiterate to the school the issues relating to temperature and chest problems. It is important the school permit the use of creams and cooling products. If you have any issues, we will be more than happy to help.

Do I need to avoid public places?

Most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places. You only need to stay away from public places (self-isolate) if advised to by the 111 online coronavirus service or a medical professional.

Don't hesitate to call your GP to get the most up to date advice. Calling 111 will give information relating to everyone and not specifically those with ED and who cannot sweat.

For more information, please see the [NHS page on coronavirus](#).