

Self-monitoring COVID-19 diary

Translated versions of the diary are available on our website: <https://bit.ly/NHStranlation>

An easy read version is also available on our website: <https://bit.ly/NHSEasyRead>

If you are pregnant or have recently given birth further information is available in the patient information leaflet: www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/suspected-coronavirus-covid-19-important-information-to-keep-you-safe-while-isolating-at-home/

This information is correct at time of publishing. COVID-19 guidance may change so please check weblinks for the most current information.

Pulse oximeter for heart rate and blood oxygen level

Your healthcare team have given you, or your carer, this **diary** and **pulse oximeter** because you have symptoms of COVID-19. A pulse oximeter helps you monitor how fast your heart is beating and the level of oxygen in your blood. Blood oxygen level is the most accurate way of keeping an eye on your progress with COVID-19. An ideal blood oxygen level is between 95% and 100%. An ideal heart rate is between 50 and 90 beats per minute (bpm).

How to use a pulse oximeter

Follow these instructions to make sure the pulse oximeter gives an accurate reading:

- Remove any nail polish or false nails and warm your hand if cold.
- Make sure you have been resting for at least five minutes before taking your measurement.
- Rest your hand on your chest at heart level and hold still.
- Switch the pulse oximeter on and place it on your finger. It works best on your middle or index finger. It should not be used on your ear.
- The reading takes time to steady. Keep the pulse oximeter in place for at least a minute, or longer if the reading keeps changing.
- Record the highest result once the reading has not changed for five seconds.
- Be careful to identify which reading is your heart rate and which is your oxygen level.

You can also watch an NHS YouTube video on how to use a pulse oximeter here:

<https://bit.ly/oximetervideo>

Translated versions are available here: <https://healthandcarevideos.uk/breathing/62524>

Recording and acting on the results

Record your results in the diary below.

Your first measurement is your baseline – so record this in the highlighted blue area. Then take recordings three times a day, at the same time each day – for example when you normally eat in the morning, at lunchtime and in the evening. Take extra measurements if you feel there has been a change in your health. Please also record changes in how you are feeling and your breathing.

Mild COVID-19 symptoms

Keep track of your temperature if you can. However, as long as your oxygen level and breathing are normal, you do not need to contact your General Practice/NHS 111 if you have a temperature or other mild COVID-19 symptoms, such as cough, muscle aches, tiredness, mild chest pain, dizziness or headache, loss of taste or sense of smell, diarrhoea, vomiting or rashes. These are common symptoms. You may not have all of these but still feel unwell. Paracetamol and regular fluids can help with these symptoms, and most people will get better by themselves within two to three weeks. Please see the NHS website for information on self-isolation or how to access care: <https://bit.ly/3pSzQ5p>

What to do if you experience the following symptoms:

Attend your nearest A&E within an hour or call 999

A minority of people with COVID-19 will suffer more severe symptoms. You should attend A&E as quickly as possible or call 999 immediately if you experience the following:

- Your blood oxygen levels are 92% or less (retake your reading immediately first)
- You are unable to complete short sentences when at rest due to breathlessness
- Your breathing gets worse suddenly.

OR if you develop these more general signs of serious illness:

- Cough up blood
- Feel cold and sweaty with pale or blotchy skin
- Collapse or faint
- Develop a rash that doesn't fade when you roll a glass over it
- Become agitated, confused or very drowsy
- Stopped passing urine or are passing urine much less than usual.

You should tell the operator you may have coronavirus and if you use a pulse oximeter give your oxygen saturation reading. These symptoms require urgent medical attention.

Contact NHS 111

If you experience any of the following COVID-19 symptoms, you should contact 111 as soon as possible:

- Feeling breathless or difficulty breathing, especially when standing up or moving
- Severe muscle aches or tiredness
- Shakes or shivers
- If you use a pulse oximeter, your blood oxygen level is 94% or 93% or continues to be lower than your usual reading where your normal oxygen saturation is below 95% (retake a reading within an hour first)
- Sense that something is wrong (general weakness, severe tiredness, loss of appetite, peeing much less than normal, unable to care for yourself – simple tasks like washing and dressing or making food).

You can access 111:

- Online at www.111.nhs.uk
- By phone 111
- Via your GP.

You should tell the operator you may have coronavirus.

Family and friends checking you are safe

It is important that someone checks on you regularly. If you are isolating from other people in the same house as you, talking on your phone or through a doorway could be better than sending text messages. It will help them hear if you are becoming more breathless or unwell. If you live alone, you should arrange to contact someone regularly. Ask them to ring you if you don't contact them as planned and ask them to seek help if you don't answer.

If you are still unwell after three weeks, please contact your GP.

Returning the pulse oximeter

You may benefit from having an oximeter for up to 14 days from the onset of your illness.

When you no longer need the device, please return it to the GP surgery or service that provided you with the oximeter. If you are unable to please ask a friend or volunteer to do this for you. You should return it in the bag provided so that it can be safely cleaned and given to other patients.

Self-monitoring COVID-19 diary

Name _____

Please record these three times a day

Days since first symptom(s) [*]		Date	Pulse	Oxygen level %	Temperature ^{**}	Feeling: better/same/worse	Breathing: better/same/worse
Day	Time						
Baseline reading							

^{*} For example, if you start recording pulse oximetry five days after your first symptom(s) started, record '5' under Day.

^{**} Record and fill in temperature if you have a thermometer.

Days since first Symptom(s) *		Date	Pulse	Oxygen level %	Temperature**	Feeling: better/same/worse	Breathing: better/same/worse
Day	Time						
Baseline reading							

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