

SUPPORT DURING CORONAVIRUS -THE CHESSER SURGERY

Mental health

- If you've been asked by the government to 'shield' for 12 weeks, you might be finding the idea daunting. But just because you've been asked to keep a physical distance between you and other people, this doesn't mean you can't keep on communicating. Think about who might benefit from you checking in on them. You might just make a difference to someone's life.
- If you're living alone and feeling lonely and isolated, please consider contacting friends and asking to have a chat. Many people are in the same situation and would love to hear a familiar voice. If you don't have friends or family you can talk to, then contact your local council to ask for help. Councils are coordinating community responses and should be able to ask someone to contact you
- Looking after our mental health is especially important at the moment. If you're worried that your mental health is a cause for concern, then please call us; we're here to look after our patients as always, and we don't want you to suffer in silence. You can also find advice online. The mental health charity Mind has some fantastic resources: <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/03/coronavirus-quarantine-socializing/608020/> and <https://www.mind.org.uk/coronavirus-we-are-here-for-you/>
- *Useful contacts:*
The Samaritans, 116 123: <https://www.samaritans.org/wales/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/talk-us-phone/>

Physical health and exercise

- If you have a specific health condition that requires you to exercise more than once a day – for example, a learning disability or autism – the government has clarified, by updating its guidance, that this is acceptable. You can find the updated advice on the government's coronavirus information pages: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>. The government has advised that, in general, people may leave their home once a day for exercise, and a specific health condition is an exception to this.
- A brisk ten-minute walk contributes to the recommended 150 minutes of exercise that we should take per week. Keeping fit and healthy is important, and the NHS has compiled a brilliant guide to exercise: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/walking-for-health/?tabname=how-much-exercise>
- We know that we usually tell people to only go to A&E if it's an emergency. In this situation, we're still telling you to go to A&E if it's an emergency. Some doctors across the UK are concerned that people aren't seeking help for themselves or others when they're seriously unwell because they're worried about the impact of coronavirus on A&E departments. Advice on when you should go to A&E can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/when-to-go-to-ae/>

Food

- If you're self-isolating, or in a vulnerable category, and have been unable to get an online food delivery or don't have anyone to shop for you, your local council should be able to help organise a food parcel for you to ensure you don't go without food.
- With so much economic uncertainty, many people are facing financial challenges that they never believed would happen to them. The Trussell Trust is a national organisation that supports foodbanks. If you don't have the financial resources to feed yourself or your family, then please check where your nearest foodbank is and look up the details of which agencies can refer you for assistance: <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>

Alcohol

- For some people, drinking alcohol regularly while we're asked to 'stay at home' means their drinking is becoming problematic. Alcohol Change UK provides brilliant advice and guidance to help people manage the amount they drink. If you're concerned that you or someone you know should be worried about this, have a look at the advice and guidance that they offer (see below).
- The NHS recommends you drink no more than 14 units of alcohol per week. This is equivalent to 6 pints of average-strength beer. A large (250ml) glass of wine is around 3 units. Drink Aware has a self-assessment tool that can help you understand whether your drinking is having an impact on your health. It isn't just about whether you 'need' a drink, but about the impact alcohol is having on your body.

- *Useful contacts:*
-Alcohol Change UK: <https://alcoholchange.org.uk>
-Drink Aware: <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk>
-Drinkline: 0300 123 1110
-Drinkline: 0300 123 1110

Domestic violence

- If you're suffering abuse from a partner or family member, the government has been very clear that this is a reasonable excuse to leave your home. If you're able to speak to us then we'd like to offer our support, but if that proves difficult, the government has advice you can refer to. Some web browsers can 'forget' what you've been searching for, if you're concerned your abuser might check what you've been doing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ovid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>
- If you're in an emergency situation and unable to speak to the operator, call 999 from a mobile, listen to the operator, cough or tap the handset if you can, then press 55 when prompted. Pressing 55 will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will help you without your having to speak.
- If you call 999 from a landline and are unable to speak, and the BT operator is unable to decide whether you need assistance, they'll put your call through to a police operator. Unlike a mobile, your landline will give the police information about where you're calling from, if you're unable to speak.
- *There are also helplines available for specific circumstances:*
-Refuge, 0808 2000 247: <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>
-Women's Aid: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-advice-for-survivors/>
-Respect Men, 0808 8010327: <https://mensadviceline.org.uk/male-victims/support-for-male-victims/>
-Galop, if you identify as LGBT+, 0800 999 5428: <https://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/>

Working from home

- If you're now working from home and you don't normally do this, you might find that you're feeling sore in places you didn't expect! The instruction to work from home if possible has meant that many of us are working in makeshift spaces. Companies didn't have time to fully assess the workstation capacity of staff, so to ensure that you make your workspace as comfortable as possible, think about using the HSE Display Screen Information to make some possibly small but meaningful adjustments: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/>
- If you have friends or relatives who have been working from home before the recent 'stay at home' instruction, they might have some advice to offer to make life more bearable. People who have been working from home for some time have probably settled into routines and found ways to structure their days. Home-working can be seen as working in your PJs, but getting dressed and putting on your shoes might make you feel more prepared for the day ahead: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeand...alance-how-to-work-from-home-and-stay-healthy>

Useful educational resources

- If you're struggling to work from home because you're trying to keep your children occupied too – or if you can spend time with your children but need some additional ideas to prevent boredom setting in – we've found some brilliant online resources to help you. If you don't have access to the internet, ask your school if they can help you.
- Ages 3 to post-16: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
- Primary or secondary school: <https://www.thenational.academy/>
-Toddlers and pre-schoolers: <https://busytoddler.com/2016/11/40-super-easy-toddler-activities/>

Where to look for help and advice

- If you're not sure what help is available to you, then consider looking at the government's coronavirus advice page, which will help you find the correct advice for your own situation: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Mobile phone companies have agreed to give free access to the NHS website for information purposes, so you don't need credit for your phone to look at the NHS advice pages during the coronavirus pandemic: <https://www.nhs.uk/>

All this information and more is available on our website: www.chesser.biz