

# COVID-19 information sheet for hospital inpatients



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## Dear patient

While you are in hospital the hospital staff will work with you to do everything they can to protect you from catching COVID-19 or any other infection. We would also like to ask you to help us to protect you, other patients and staff from becoming infected with COVID-19.

The most important step to protect you and others from COVID-19 at home or in hospital is to get vaccinated as soon as you are offered the vaccine. The vaccine reduces your chance of getting infected. The vaccine takes time to work. It is really important to complete the full course of vaccination to get the most benefit. Remember, although the vaccine is very good it does not work perfectly for everyone. The good news is that people who do catch infection after they have completed vaccination usually do not get as sick as unvaccinated people.

The virus that causes this infection can get into the hospital in any person. It can come in with a patient, a staff member or a visitor. It is very hard to know for sure if someone is clear of the virus because the person who has the infection may not have any symptoms. The tests for the virus are good but they are not perfect so sometimes a person has an infection but it does not show up on the test. This means that any other patient or staff member could have the infection at any time and so could you but as most staff and patients are vaccinated now this will help to keep you safer.

When a person in the hospital has infection the virus can infect both patients and hospital staff. We understand that it is worrying. We want you to know that we are doing everything practical to encourage people to get vaccinated and to find people who have infection as quickly as possible and to provide them with extra care measures so as to protect them and to protect everyone else.

## Some of the things that we do are

You may be asked if you have been vaccinated

You may be offered vaccination

You may be asked many times if you have any new symptoms of COVID-19.

You may be offered testing many times to check if you have COVID-19 even if you have no symptoms. The test needs a sample from your nose and/or throat.

Please agree to have a nose swab even though you have had it many times before.

We take extra precautions to stop the spread of infection with everyone but especially with people who we know have infection or we think might have infection.

We ask staff who have symptoms to stay away from the hospital even if they have had vaccine.

## You can help us keep everyone safe when you are in hospital

- It is good to move around a bit but please do not go into the room or bed-space of other patients or stop to chat with other patients.
- Please do not meet relatives outside the hospital or stand talking with other people at the door or gate of the hospital
- Don't share your things with other patients; this includes newspapers, food, headphones etc.
- Clean your hands regularly with the hand gel on the ward.
- Wear a mask when you are outside of your room or away from your bed-space. If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask all the time please let staff know and they will give you a mask to wear.

## **Important information for going home**

If you get shortness of breath, cough, temperature, (or any other [COVID-19 symptoms](#)) or become unwell phone your GP for further advice. A free COVID-19 test can be arranged for you if your doctor thinks you need it.

If you have had a positive COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have been discharged home from hospital you must self-isolate\* for 14 days from the day your symptoms started. Because you have been hospitalised this is a little longer than most people. The last 5 days of self-isolation must be without a fever.

If you have been told you have had contact with COVID-19 while in hospital you will need to restrict\* your movements for 14 days after you go home unless you are fully vaccinated. You should have a test for COVID-19 on the day you go home and again at day 10; if the test on day 10 does not detect COVID-19 and you continue to have no symptoms, you may stop your restricted movements. If you are a contact and are fully vaccinated you usually do not need to restrict movements unless there are some special circumstances and you are advised to do so.

\* Self-isolation means you should isolate yourself from other people in your home. You should not go outside unless you have your own outdoor space away from other people. Restricting your movements means you should stay at home; you can go outside to exercise as long as you keep 2m from other people. A full breakdown is on [hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie)

## **Further information**

You can get further information on COVID-19 at [www.hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus) and information on hand hygiene at [www.hse.ie/handhygiene](https://www.hse.ie/handhygiene)

Please talk to any of our staff at any time if you have any questions or concerns during your time at your hospital.