MYELOPATHY.ORG

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) GUIDANCE

Dear Friends,

These are extraordinary times; coronavirus (COVID-19) represents a nearly unprecedented challenge to our healthcare systems and a danger to all of us.

An important question that we need to contemplate is how will coronavirus (COVID-19) affect individuals with Cervical Myelopathy?

At the moment, there is no data related to coronavirus (COVID-19) and Cervical Myelopathy. The latest Public Health England guidance states that, in addition to people over 70, anyone with a chronic neurological condition is at increased risk of a severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19).

I think we need to err on the side of caution and consider individuals with Cervical Myelopathy to potentially be at an increased risk. I therefore urge you to **read and follow the latest advice and guidance published in your home countries.**

The UK Government and the NHS provides comprehensive information relating to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and in particular is urging any individual in a group which is identified as being at increased risk of a severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to follow the social distancing advice. In addition, the US Centre of Disease Control provides the following guidance for people at increased risk which you may find useful.

Our primary concern is everyone's health and well-being. We understand that there is a lot of uncertainty at the moment and that this can be unsettling. We will provide as much information as we can, as soon as we can.

Our staff are working from home so please do get in touch via email or on our Facebook Support Group. We are continuing to work to support the Cervical Myelopathy community in these challenging times.

Stay safe and we will be in touch again with further updates.

With best wishes,
Dr Mark Kotter (Founder of Myelopathy.org)

THIS SUMMARY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT SHORT NOTICE AS THE GOVERNMENT RELEASES ITS OWN UPDATES – THIS SUMMARY WAS LAST UPDATED MONDAY 23RD MARCH 2020

GENERAL ADVICE

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or high temperature. If you have these symptoms, however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started.

Wash your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose, or after being in public areas where other people are doing so. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to.

To reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue away immediately. Then wash your hands or use a hand sanitising gel.

Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

MYELOPATHY.ORG

FOR UK PATIENTS ONLY

You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Hospital staff are currently reviewing many outpatient appointments and where possible have offered telephone consultations to keep patient travel to a minimum. Where a face to face appointment cannot be safely delayed or replaced by a telephone appointment, then this will go ahead. Any patient who has not already heard from their doctor to make alternative arrangements should contact the hospital to confirm that the appointment is going ahead and as planned.

MYELOPATHY.ORG

WHAT IS SOCIAL DISTANCING?

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough.
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible.
3. Work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to employer guidance for more information.
4. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs.
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media.
6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.

Everyone should be trying to follow these measures as much as is pragmatic.

FURTHER INFORMATION

There is more advice and information available from the NHS and government websites. This can differ depending on where you live in the UK, but with the situation developing daily, this information is reviewed and updated regularly.

Latest UK updates:

The NHS website contains the latest information about the virus and up-to-date advice on how to protect yourself.

Update 16 March - Public Health England's Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK and protecting older people and vulnerable adults: This guidance is for everyone. It advises on social distancing measures we should all be taking to reduce social interaction between people in order to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). It is intended for use in situations where people are living in their own homes, with or without additional support from friends, family and carers. If you live in a residential care setting - guidance is available at residential care setting.

Further information, updates and advice are available on the gov.uk website.

Scotland

- NHS Inform
- Scottish government

Wales

- Public Health Wales
- Welsh government

Northern Ireland

- Public Health Agency
- Northern Ireland government