

What is the Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses have been around for years and are usually transferred between animals, this one has mutated and has been able to spread to humans and this is called Covid-19. It is a respiratory disease, a bit similar to the cold or flu, but because our bodies have not been exposed to this before we do not have the full immunity to this. What will happen is the more people who are infected and survive will have immunity to it. This will then lead to more and more people not being infected and society becoming as immune as it can be to it. The same thing happened with the flu in the early 1900's.

Why and how has life changed?

The Coronavirus is very contagious and is transferred in the same way that a common cold and flu are. This means that when you sneeze or cough that the droplets of that are given out by the body contain the virus. Some people are not as careful as others and when they sneeze or cough they do it without a tissue or using their sleeve. When they do not do this the virus becomes air born and lands on other surface or their hands and then another person touches a surface that the droplets have touched they then have the virus on their hands or other parts of their body.

A virus can live for up to 3 days on a surface and can then be transferred into the body, some viruses can even lay dead for a while and then when they get into the human airways they reactivate and become alive again. This is why it is so important that we stay inside because it is very contagious and we need to stay safe and protect each other. If you do need to go out make sure that you wash your hands as often as you can or use hand gel, not too much as it can dry your hands out and that can be painful.

We also need to think about each other and the fact that it will not affect everyone in the same way, some people will have mild symptoms and it will just mean rest will help you, but it can affect others in a more severe way and they can get really sick, we do not know who will be affected in which way. It is also important to think that you may also be a carrier and not get any symptoms, but you can still pass that on to other people so it is really important that we follow the rules that are put into place by the Government. This is not to restrict our social liberty, but to protect each other and making sure the virus is not able to spread and so that the NHS does not become overwhelmed.

There is also no cure at the moment for this new strain of Coronavirus and the scientists are working really hard to find an antidote and also a vaccine, but this will take time and they are working around the clock to do this.

Do we need to panic?

No, there is no need to panic if we follow the rules because this has happened before and the world has been through pandemics in the past. Society has evolved and changed, but we as a generation have not been through anything like this before. Pandemics tend to happen every 25 to 30 years and it is a part of life. The good thing now is that we have improved healthcare and society has improved; people are living longer, people are being cured from diseases that used to be big killers and we are adapting to new technologies and treatments.

It is scary and it is not what we call 'normal' life, but this is not going to be here forever and if we follow the rules then things will get back to normal quicker. The best thing to do is stay at home, stay with your family, play on the PlayStation or other console, watch that Netflix series you have always wanted to and if you work, do what you can from home. It is also

important that you only watch the news that is on the TV, although the internet is amazing, anyone can become a journalist or an expert through social media and often what they post is not true and it is so easy for someone to post lies to try and scare people and to become 'famous'. The mainstream news will keep you up to date and if you are like me, try not to watch much news, maybe once a day and enjoy time with your family.

There is also no shortage in food or the supply chain, those people who have stripped the shelves bare in shops have caused panic, but there is no need, they will have more food than they know what to do with and this will cause waste in food. You will still be able to get food.

Try to stay calm and follow the rules, if you want to talk to family member and keep in contact then download an app called ZOOM from IOS or Playstore and you can all chat at the same time as a family, even have a family meal over the screens on your phone.

The rules

The rule we have to follow are:

- 1) **Stay in your house and stay safe.** You can still go into your garden and enjoy the fresh air if you have one and you can get on with all those things you have never had time for in the past. That could be DIY or as I said, watching the Netflix series you have never watched.
- 2) **Go to the shops if you need to.** You are still allowed to go to the shop if you need to get things, this includes all shopping in supermarkets, but not things such as clothes or any other high street store.
- 3) **Exercise.** You are allowed to go out in public and exercise once a day, there is no time limit on this and you can go with members of your household. Go for that walk and spend some time together.
- 4) **Work.** Only go to work if you really have to, if you do not need to go to work then stay in.
- 5) **Stay 2 metres apart.** Stay 2 metres apart from other members of the public, if you have to cross over the other side of the road to avoid people and when you go out make sure that you keep two metres apart.
- 6) **Wash your hands.** Wash your hands as often as you can for at least 20 seconds, this will get rid of the virus from your hands and will keep everyone safe

Final point

Please do not panic, people are scared because they do not have the answers to this problem yet, but if you follow the rules you will be safe. Stay in contact with your family, check in everyday with them and make sure that you tell them how much you love them.