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| **Instruction for use:****This blog has been created as general information piece for your patients around Covid-19. Please adapt the content as you would like, otherwise, if you’re happy with the content as it’s written, you can delete this box then upload the content into the blog section of your website. We have included a number of links to credible Australian websites throughout the text so please check these links are carried across when you upload the content to your website. Finally, we’ve also included a general disclaimer so please amend as required. Kind Regards, Ellie, Marketing Director of Splice Marketing.** |

# Managing Covid-19

Many of our patients are understandably concerned about the Coronavirus. It’s important to take this situation seriously and follow the advice of our public health professionals to slow down the transmission of this illness and ensure we have the capacity to care for those most seriously affected by it.

*[This blog provides general information and discussions about health and related subjects. The information and other content provided in this blog, or in any linked materials, are not intended and should not be construed as medical advice, nor is the information a substitute for professional medical expertise or treatment. The information was last updated on 19 March 2020]*

## What Is the Coronavirus?

There are many [coronaviruses](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions_1.pdf) in circulation each year, ranging from the common cold to serious respiratory diseases. The current coronavirus started in China and has now spread around the world, creating a global pandemic.

## What Is Covid-19?

[Covid-19](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions_1.pdf) is the disease caused by this coronavirus. It is spread by direct contact between people and causes symptoms like fever, sore throat, coughing, fatigue and breathing difficulties.

## How Serious Is It?

Many of us will get Covid-19 because it spreads so easily. Many of us will recover fairly well.

The disease is more dangerous for older people and those with underlying medical conditions. And there’s still a lot we don’t know about it because it’s new.

We’re trying to avoid a situation where many, many people are sick all at the same time. Even if only 5% of those sick people need to be hospitalised, the numbers will overwhelm the health system, especially since our doctors and nurses will probably also get sick.

That’s why we’re trying to ‘[flatten the curve](https://www.health.com/condition/infectious-diseases/coronavirus/flatten-the-curve-meaning)’, meaning slow down the number of infections to a manageable level. That may mean the disease hangs around longer but it will give us time to treat people properly.

One of the best ways to flatten the curve is [social distancing](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-information-on-social-distancing.pdf), where you stay home if you’re sick and, if you’re well, avoid handshakes, hugs, kisses, and group events.

## Should I See You if I Have Symptoms of Covid-19?

If you have symptoms of Covid-19, ring us and follow our advice over the phone – do not just turn up as this will put other people at risk.

## What Are The Most Important Things I Should Do?

At this time [enter date], the [key things to do are](https://www.gps-can.com.au/covid19-blog/covid-19-practical-information):

* Wash your hands with soap and warm water thoroughly and often for 20 seconds, especially before/after eating, after going to the toilet, and after touching frequently used common surfaces like the kettle or a lift button
* Stay home if you are unwell
* Get the flu vaccine from mid-April onwards. The flu vaccine won’t prevent Covid-19, but it will help you avoid seasonal flu
* If you have a chronic illness like [diabetes](https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/news/15723?type=articles) or asthma, [make sure](https://www.gps-can.com.au/covid19-blog/covid-19-practical-information) you have a current care plan and a month’s supply of medicine at home
* Manage your mental health – ensure you stay updated with information from a [reliable source](https://ama.com.au/article/latest-information-covid-19), but resist the urge to check the news constantly
* Don’t stockpile, but do make sure you have some [additional food, cleaning and medical supplies](https://www.gps-can.com.au/covid19-blog/covid-19-practical-information) just in case you have to stay at home for two weeks.

## Should I Still Attend Medical Appointments That Aren’t About Covid-19?

If you are showing [symptoms of Covid-19](https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus-covid-19) like a fever, sore throat, if you’ve been in contact with a person with the disease, or if you’ve been overseas, then you must ring the clinic first and follow our advice.

If you do not have symptoms of Covid-19, have not been in close contact with an infected person and have not been overseas, then yes, you should keep your usual appointments for care relating to pregnancy, chronic conditions, vaccinations or other health needs like ear infections or injuries.

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## About Quarantine and Self-Isolation

If you have been in close contact with someone who has Covid-19, or if you actually have the disease, you must stay at home for two weeks. That’s tough but important.

### Why Is It Important to Stay Home?

The aim is to slow down the spread of the virus so that our health system can cope. Remember how all the toilet paper disappeared at once because everyone suddenly wanted it? Well, we don’t want that to happen to hospital beds, especially those precious few intensive care beds. They’re always a precious resource, needed for people who’d had heart attacks, car crashes or surgery – things that can affect people of all ages and will continue despite this new virus.

### Quarantine

Anyone returning to Australia from another country will now go into home quarantine for two weeks as should anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has Covid19. This doesn’t mean you have the illness – it means you’re staying away from others until you either (a) get sick and test positive for Covid-19 at which point you start self-isolation or (b) stay healthy at home for 2 weeks before getting back to your normal life.

### Self-Isolation

[Isolation](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-isolation-guidance_2.pdf) is for people who have tested positive for Covid-19 but do not need to be in hospital. At this point, people who have been in close contact with you will need to go into quarantine.

Here’s an excellent [guide to self-isolation and quarantine](https://www.gps-can.com.au/covid19-blog/a-guide), which includes advice on stopping the disease spreading to family members and housemates, as well as ideas on how to look after your physical and mental health.

## Get Used to Things Being Done Differently

As we adjust to Covid19, you may notice some things being done differently. That might include [telehealth consultations](https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/news/15723?type=articles) with your doctor or e-prescriptions for your pharmacist. This is to help reduce the spread of the virus.

Your children may also be at home if their school is closed. Here are some tips to [prepare emotionally for a family lockdown](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/13/the-family-lockdown-guide-how-to-emotionally-prepare-for-coronavirus-quarantine).

## Recognise and Respond to Anxiety

Understandably, many people are anxious about the virus and its knock-on effects. You may be worried about catching or spreading the virus, and you may also be worried about how you will cope financially if you have to stay home without pay or if your business starts losing customers. Your kids may also be worried.

The Australian Psychological Society has prepared some helpful [tips for coping with coronavirus anxiety](https://www.psychology.org.au/getmedia/38073179-4701-48bd-afd9-988c560ee2f9/20APS-IS-COVID-19-P1.pdf), including helping anxious kids.

This situation is changing quickly. It won’t be over in a hurry either so we need to look after each other over the next few months. We’re here for you throughout this pandemic, if you need help to manage other illnesses or if you’re feeling [anxious](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak).

Please insert your contact details here.