

Changes to processes for accessing COVID-19 treatments

The way to access COVID-19 treatments if you have tested positive has changed in Scotland and England. See below for details on these changes, as well as for the current processes in Wales and Northern Ireland.

ENGLAND

Before the 27th June 2023, there was one national process for accessing COVID-19 treatments.

After the 27th June, COVID-19 treatments now come under regular NHS care, and so have been taken over by local NHS systems, called Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). Each ICB can set up COVID-19 treatment services for each area in their own way. This means that each ICB might have a slightly different process for accessing treatment.

What these changes mean for you:

- **You won't be contacted by the NHS about possible treatments after reporting a positive test result** – instead, you need to contact the NHS yourself.
- **As soon as possible after testing positive, you should contact your GP practice, call NHS 111, or contact your hospital specialist**, so that you can be considered for treatment.
- Before the 27th June, you had to report your COVID-19 lateral flow test result before you could receive treatment. After the 27th June, you no longer have to report your COVID test result in order to access an assessment for treatment. However, you are still encouraged to report your test result [here](#), to make sure that it is visible to the NHS.

If you would like to find your local ICB, the [NHS England Website lists them here](#). You will then be able to access your ICB's website to find out how to access treatments in your local area. If you are unable to access this information for whatever reason, contact your GP surgery or your hospital team, and they will be able to advise you.

What if I'm away from home?

Contact the ICB service where you normally live, or call 111 or your GP, as they will have the information on your eligibility for COVID-19 treatments. They can then coordinate with the ICB where you are, to provide you with the appropriate treatments.

SCOTLAND

The way to access COVID-19 treatments in Scotland has changed from the 27th June 2023. Before the 27th June, there was one national process for accessing COVID-19 treatments. COVID-19 treatments now come under regular NHS care, and will be handled by local NHS systems called Health Boards.

What does this change mean for me?

- **You won't be contacted by the NHS after testing positive.**
- **Instead, to access COVID-19 treatments, call your local Health Board** as soon as possible after testing positive.
- To find your local Health Board and its contact information, please see this [NHS Inform webpage](#). If you are unable to access this for any reason, contact your GP surgery or your hospital team, and they will be able to advise you.

What if I'm away from home?

Contact the Health Board where you normally live, as they will have information on your eligibility for COVID-19 treatments, and can then coordinate with the Health Board where you are staying to provide you with the appropriate treatment.

WALES

The process for accessing COVID-19 treatments in Wales hasn't changed. When you test positive, you need to [report your test result online](#) or by calling 119. If you're eligible for treatment, you will usually be contacted by text message or telephone call within 48 hours of reporting your positive test. If you receive a text message, it is important to follow the instructions and reply so that you are contacted for an assessment. You can find out more about [the process in Wales here](#).

What if I am eligible but I haven't been contacted after 48 hours?

If you have not been contacted within 48 hours of reporting your positive test, you need to call 111. Tell them that you live in Wales, have symptoms, and have tested positive for COVID-19, and that you believe you're in the highest risk group and are eligible for COVID-19 treatment. You should then be passed on for assessment, or referred to the National Antiviral Service in Wales.

NORTHERN IRELAND

The process for accessing COVID-19 treatments in Northern Ireland hasn't changed. When you test positive, you need to [report your test result online](#) or by calling 119. When you have reported your positive test result, you should receive a text message about your result. If you are eligible for treatment, you should receive a second text message, which will tell you that your local Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust will be informed, and will review your information to see if you are eligible. If you are eligible they will then contact you via telephone.

What if I am eligible but I haven't been contacted with the second text message, or I then haven't been contacted by my local HSC trust after 48 hours?

Contact your GP, who can then contact your local HSC trust on your behalf.

What if I am in the Republic of Ireland when I test positive?

You can access treatment by contacting the nearest GP in the area you are staying, you do not need to contact your GP in Northern Ireland.

More information on [the process in Northern Ireland can be found here](#).

WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE TO ME?

According to the NHS patient enquiries Q&A:

“There are currently two types of treatments available for patients – neutralising monoclonal antibodies (nMAbs) and antivirals. The NHS will advise which treatment, if any, is suitable for you.

“If you are given an antiviral treatment, they normally come as capsules that you swallow, and they can be taken at home. A pharmacy will usually arrange for the medicine to be delivered to you or it can be collected by someone else such as a friend or relative.

If a neutralising monoclonal antibody treatment is right for you, it will usually be given to you through a drip in your arm (infusion). You’ll usually get it at a local health centre. Treatment takes approximately 30 minutes with time afterwards to check you feel OK.

“Your local NHS provider will give you instructions on where the treatment will be given to you, and how to get there and back home safely. The NHS may be able to arrange for your transport if you are unable to make your own COVID-safe travel arrangements.”