

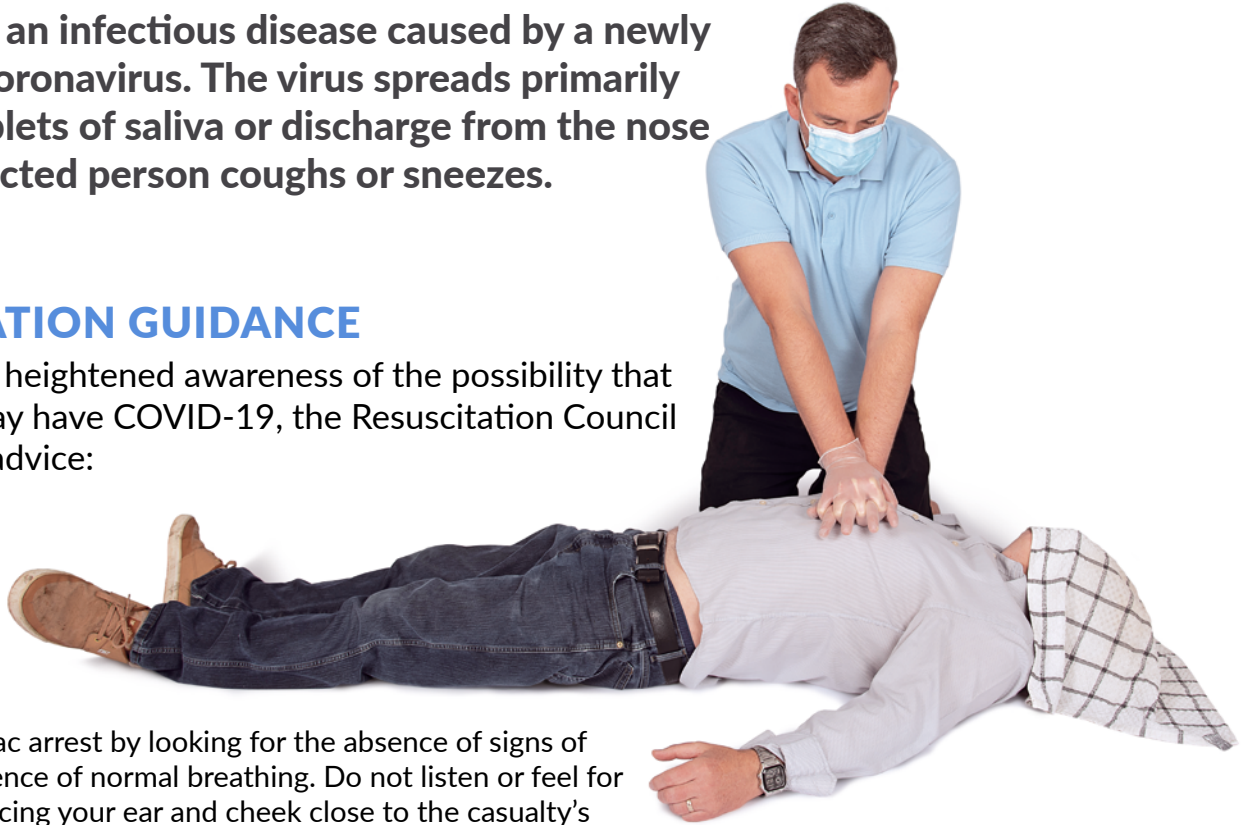
# FIRST AID CPR GUIDANCE

COVID-19 / SARS-COV-2

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

## RESUSCITATION GUIDANCE

Because of the heightened awareness of the possibility that the casualty may have COVID-19, the Resuscitation Council UK offers this advice:



- Recognise cardiac arrest by looking for the absence of signs of life and the absence of normal breathing. Do not listen or feel for breathing by placing your ear and cheek close to the casualty's mouth. If you are in any doubt about confirming cardiac arrest, the default position is to start chest compressions until help arrives
- Make sure an ambulance is on its way. If COVID-19 is suspected, tell them when you call 999
- If there is a perceived risk of infection, rescuers should place a cloth/towel over the casualty's mouth and nose and attempt compression only CPR and early defibrillation, until the ambulance (or advanced care team) arrives.
- Early use of a defibrillator significantly increases the casualty's chances of survival and does not increase risk of infection
- If the rescuer has access to any form of personal protective equipment (PPE) this should be worn
- After performing compression-only CPR, all rescuers should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water; alcohol-based hand gel is a convenient alternative. They should also seek advice from the NHS 111 coronavirus advice service or medical adviser



## PAEDIATRIC RESUSCITATION ADVICE

When providing CPR for paediatric patients it is essential that rescue breaths are provided, this does provide the First Aider with greater risk but rescue breaths are crucial to the survival of the child. The Resuscitation Council UK state 'We are aware that paediatric cardiac arrest is unlikely to be caused by a cardiac problem and is more likely to be a respiratory one, making ventilations crucial to the child's chances of survival. The importance of calling an ambulance and taking immediate action cannot be stressed highly enough.'

## **GENERAL ADVICE FOR FIRST AIDERS**

- Wear PPE to protect yourself and others around you
- Try to assist at a safe distance from the casualty as much as you can
- If they are capable, tell them to do things for you, but treating the casualty properly should be your first concern
- Cover cuts and grazes with sterile waterproof dressings
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after treating a casualty (or use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available)
- Dispose of all waste safely
- Speak to your employer about your role as a First Aider and how it may be affected
- Keep up-to-date with the latest Government and NHS clinical guidance

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL UNWELL**

If you think you have symptoms of COVID-19 you can order a free NHS test to check if you have contracted the virus. You and anyone in your household must self-isolate until you get your result.

If you need medical advice about your symptoms you can get help at:

- **England: NHS 111 online coronavirus service**
- **Scotland: NHS inform**
- **Wales: NHS 111 Wales**
- **Northern Ireland: get advice from a GP or GP out-of-hours service**



**Call 999 if you feel very unwell or think there's something seriously wrong.**

## **DURING TRAINING**

If you start to feel unwell during training, notify the Trainer/Assessor immediately and follow the guidelines of the venue, i.e. complying with the Track and Trace programme.

**You should go home and self-isolate until you have had a test.**



## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Where it is not possible to maintain a 2 metre or more distance away from an individual, the following items of PPE are recommended:

- A fluid-repellent surgical mask
- Disposable gloves
- Apron
- Eye protection (if risk of contamination of eyes by splashes or droplets)

In addition to PPE, an increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and equipment, using standard household cleaning and disinfection products is also advised.

## TRAINING

Any decision on whether training should go ahead must be employer led and if they deem it a requirement during a lockdown period, then you are able to attend training.

When considering training, employers and learners must ensure the requirements in the Government's coronavirus restrictions are strictly adhered to.

## CERTIFICATE EXTENSIONS

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have provided an extension to first aid qualification expiry dates to help employers during this period. You can check if a learner is eligible for an extension by using our [calculator](#).

First Aid at Work (FAW) or Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) certificates that expired after 16 March 2020 can remain valid until 31 October 2020 or 6 months from date of expiry, whichever is later. All requalification training for these certificates should be completed by 31 March 2021.



## USEFUL LINKS

### [Resuscitation Council UK](#)

Statement on COVID-19 in relation to CPR and resuscitation in first aid and community settings.



### [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): latest information and advice.



### [NHS](#)

Information and advice about coronavirus (COVID-19).



### [GOV.UK](#)

Guidance for first responders and others in close contact with symptomatic people.



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