Dear Camden resident,

We are getting in touch from Camden Council because we understand the Government has written to you advising you to take extra precautions to protect yourself from coronavirus. This is because you have a specific health condition which means you’re at high risk from coronavirus (clinically extremely vulnerable). We wanted to set out all of the following advice/support in one place to help you stay safe and to update you on the Government’s new shielding support service.

Firstly though, we know that it’s a worrying time at the moment. Please remember that you can get in touch with us if you need help – now or in the weeks ahead. Whether you need to access advice with your housing or financial situation, need help accessing food or support to self-isolate, or you’re worried about your mental health, find out more about services that are available to you at **camden.gov.uk/coronavirus** or by calling **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.

**Follow lockdown restrictions and public health advice to keep yourself safe**

In addition to the lockdown restrictions that are in place until 2 December, please follow this guidance if you are clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus (COVID-19):

* Register for the Government’s new shielding support service at [gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support) where you can register for a priority supermarket delivery slot and register your need for local support (if you have a priority delivery slot already, you will keep it). You will need your NHS number to apply which you can find at the top of the letter the Government sent you. If you need support to register, please call us on 020 7974 4444 (option 9)
* Stay at home as much as possible but you’re encouraged to leave the house to exercise while following public health advice, or attend GP or hospital appointments.
* You are strongly advised to work from home. If you cannot work from home, you should not go to work. To support your income, you may be able to be put on furlough or access Statutory Sick Pay or Employment Support Allowance. You can apply for both of these benefits at the same time online - **gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/how-to-claim** - or by calling Job Centre plus on **0800 169 0350.** If you are worried about losing your job or have an employment-related question, you can access advice through a local voluntary sector organisation. Find out more at [coronavirus-help.camden.gov.uk.](https://coronavirus-help.camden.gov.uk/)

Please note that the above guidance is slightly different to the guidance that was in place during the first lockdown in the spring. Specifically, if you live with other people and they aren’t clinically extremely vulnerable, they can still leave the house for the permitted reasons. You can read the latest guidance in full at **gov.uk/coronavirus.**

**In addition to the new guidance, it remains absolutely vital that you continue to follow public health advice which is:**

* Wash your hands regularly with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds
* Wear a face covering in indoor public spaces, unless exempt. When wearing a face covering, it should cover your nose and mouth
* Stay 2 meters apart from people you don’t live with
* If you develop symptoms, self-isolate and get tested via [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/Wr6gCBNZ3HA9NyAS6gxfQ?domain=nhs.uk) or by calling 119

**Local health services are still open and here for you**

Please know that the NHS is still here for you during lockdown. If you’re worried about your mental or physical health, need to speak to your GP, or have a scheduled appointment coming up, please know that local health services and the NHS are open. Services are running in a COVID-safe way, which means extra precautions are in place to keep you safe. Services might look a bit different – for example, you might speak to somebody over the phone instead of face-to-face – but please don’t let that put you off accessing health advice, support or treatment. You can still contact your GP surgery or access advice via 111 online or by calling 111.

**Book an appointment to have the flu vaccine**

The flu vaccination won’t protect you from coronavirus but flu by itself can be serious and having coronavirus and flu at the same time could make you seriously ill – particularly since you have underlying health conditions. Anyone who is either clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus or lives with someone who is in this group, they are now eligible for a free flu vaccine.

It’s also really important that children are vaccinated against the flu because they can easily spread it to family members or others in the community. Please be aware that the nasal spray contains a very tiny amount of a highly processed form of pork gelatine. If you’re uncomfortable with your child having this content, you can organise for them to have the injectable vaccine instead which is free from pork gelatine by calling the local NHS on **0203 317 5076.**

**How do I get the vaccine?**

* Adults can get a flu vaccine via the GP or, if you’re pregnant, through your midwifery service
* Children aged 2-3 years can get their nasal spray vaccine from their GP
* School aged children up to year 7 will be offered the nasal spray vaccine in school
* If you or your child is allergic to anything, such as eggs or neomycin, please make this is clear to the person administering the vaccine, so an alternative can be offered if needed

**Staying in touch**

We are continuing to regularly communicate with all of our residents via a range of different channels:

* We have a weekly page in the Camden New Journal to share the latest news. You can pick up a copy for free in many places across the borough, or we [upload the digital version here](https://issuu.com/camdenmagazine/docs/cnj_20covid19_20insert_205_20november_20issue_2033) every Thursday
* Follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/camdencouncil) or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/LBCamden)
* [Subscribe](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKLBC/signup/14866) to our weekly coronavirus e-bulletin

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