



## Advice for patients attending the Emergency Department during Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

### When should I attend the Emergency Department?

While people are being asked to ensure they are choosing the right place for their medical needs, such as MUs, pharmacies and GPs, it is **vitaly important** that patients do not feel that they cannot or should not attend the Emergency Department (also known as A&E or casualty) if necessary.

The Emergency Department deals with genuine life-threatening emergencies such as:

- [Loss of consciousness](#)
- Acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- [Chest pain](#)
- Breathing difficulties
- [Severe bleeding that cannot be stopped](#)
- [Severe allergic reactions](#)
- Severe burns or scalds
- [Stroke](#)
- Major trauma such as a road traffic accident

Please attend the Emergency Department if you are experiencing any of the potentially life-threatening emergencies above so you can be assessed and receive any urgent care you might need. You will not be made to feel you have wasted our time and measures are in place to protect you, other patients and ourselves from coronavirus.

### How do I get to the Emergency Department?

#### By Ambulance

If your condition is serious and you are experiencing any of the above symptoms, please dial 999 for an ambulance or ask a friend or relative to do so and you will be brought directly to the Emergency Department.

#### By Private transport

If a friend/neighbour/family member is able to drive you to the Emergency Department, please see our [hospital site map here](#).

### What should I do if I am unwell, but not suffering the urgent symptoms detailed above?

Less severe injuries can be treated in [urgent care centres or minor injury units](#). During the

Covid-19 outbreak all of Dorset’s Minor Injuries Units, and the Urgent Treatment Centre in Weymouth, are providing telephone consultations. Face-to-face appointments are also available but only where and when strictly necessary. Please do not just turn up – you cannot be seen without an appointment. Contact details of Dorset’s MIUs/UTCs are available [here](#).




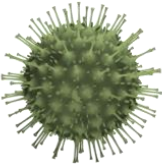
Please remember ED is not an alternative for a GP appointment. If you GP is closed you can visit [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) or call 111, which will direct you to the best local service available.

## Visiting the Emergency Department

If you arrive to the Emergency Department by ambulance the ambulance crew will provide the relevant details to reception and hand you over to the clinical staff at DCH. If you are seriously ill, staff will have been alerted to this whilst you were on route to the hospital.

If you are not in a life-threatening or serious condition you will be prioritised by the ED staff along with the other patients waiting to be seen. Arriving by ambulance does not necessarily mean you be seen sooner than if you had made your own way to ED.

**In order to protect patients, staff, and the public, and practice effective social distancing, we are introducing new arrangements for ED admissions. Please read carefully the information below.**

	<p>Do you have any <b>new</b> symptoms of a cough?</p>
	<p>Do you have a fever/high temperature?</p>
	<p>Do you have a change or loss of taste and/or smell?</p>
	<p>Has someone you live with tested positive for coronavirus in the past 10 days?</p> <p>Have you been in contact with anyone else who has tested positive for coronavirus in the past ten days?</p>

If you have answered ‘**YES**’ to any of the above, please **DO NOT** attend the department.

**If you have COVID symptoms and need medical advice, use the [NHS 111 online service](#).**





### About this leaflet:

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 Williams Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2JY  
[www.dchft.nhs.uk](http://www.dchft.nhs.uk)



**When attending the Emergency Department please be mindful of the information below:**

	<p>Please attend ED alone if possible. If you need to bring someone with you, please arrive with one person. Please do not bring your whole family. The person who brought you to ED may be asked to wait in the car for the duration of your visit.</p> <p>If you would normally have a carer or personal assistant, this person will not be counted as an additional visitor and may accompany you to assist with communication or to meet your health or social care needs. This is at the discretion of the nurse in charge.</p>
	<p>Please ask the person bringing you to wait in the car after dropping you off at the ED reception.</p> <p>When booking in, you will be asked questions relating to COVID and may be either directed to the waiting room in the new triage building or your car depending on how busy the department is. This is to allow for social distancing measures to be met and ensure everyone's safety. You will be directed back to your car if you have COVID symptoms and will be phoned by a member of the ED to ensure everyone's safety.</p> <p>Once triaged, you will be accompanied to the main ED where you will be asked to wait in the most appropriate area.</p>
	<p>Hands should be washed frequently for 20 seconds each time, at home, before coming into the hospital and as needed – for example after touching your face or using the toilet.</p> <p>Please make use of the hand sanitiser at main and department entrances. Further information on hand hygiene is available <a href="#">on our website</a>.</p>
	<p>In line with Government Guidance, <b>all visitors to the hospital must wear a face covering</b>, unless you are <a href="#">exempt due to an age, health or disability reason</a>. Please arrive at the department with your own face covering if possible. If you do not have one, masks will be available at main entrances. Visitors must also put on an apron and gloves. These will also be available on main entrances. However, we understand this may not be possible after an accident. <a href="#">More information about what to expect when visiting the hospital is available here</a>.</p>

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	<p>Please leave your surgical mask on until you leave the hospital. You can dispose of the surgical mask in the bins at the main entrances and put your own face covering back on or, if you prefer, you can wear the surgical mask home.</p>
	<p>In order to comply with social distancing rules, to the best of your ability, please keep your distance from other people wherever possible and follow the signs and directions in the Trust. <b>Please keep to the LEFT in corridors.</b></p>
	<p>In order to minimise risk, reduce the amount of people in the Trust and to allow for social distancing, if you are not admitted to a ward <b>please leave the Trust immediately after your visit.</b></p> <p>If you are admitted to a ward, your family/friends will need to discuss visiting hours with the ward as this is restricted – there are exceptional circumstances which will be explained as needed by the ward staff. <a href="#">More information on patient visiting is available here.</a></p>

**Please be aware that front line staff will be wearing full protective clothing for everyone’s safety.**

### Property and belongings

If you are attending ED yourself, please do not bring in any items of value. Personal property remains the responsibility of the patient or patient’s family or carers.

**Useful websites:** <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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