

Covid-19 Shielding Clarification

A letter to CLL patients from the UK CLL Forum

The UK CLL Forum is the umbrella organisation for CLL specialists, researchers, scientists and related charities treatment and support across the UK. We are aware that there has been some confusion over what CLL patients should be doing during the current viral pandemic. The following advice is important, and we would urge all CLL patients to follow the recommendations. Please print and provide this information to your Health Care lead or employer should they be doubt as to your need to shield.

Why is this letter necessary?

Some CLL patients have been unclear about what 'self-isolation' and 'shielding' mean, whether this applies to them, and what they should do. This letter clarifies the position.

If you are a CLL patient, you have a damaged immune system, even if you are on 'watch and wait'. This means that you are in the very vulnerable group and makes it more likely that you will be unable to fight off infections. The Covid-19 virus is believed to be very easily transmitted and catching the virus could lead to very serious complications. All CLL Patients should follow the Shielding guidance detailed in the following link. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Our recommendations

These are our strong recommendation for **all** CLL patients:

- You should shield at home. You should not leave your house and should not have contact with any people outside of your household. Do not go out except in your own garden.
- If you do need visits from people who provide essential support to you such as healthcare, personal support with daily needs or social care, they may continue, but:
- All people coming to your house should wash their hands on arriving at your house and frequently while they are there. You should do the same.
- Have supplies delivered and left at the doorstep. Patients should wash their hands having opened their post each morning and wash their hands after they've put any delivered shopping away
- Keep at least 6 feet from any delivery person or other people who may call.
- If you are living with other people, they should self-isolate also. This means they must follow all the guidance given here.

Executive Committee:

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- If you have not received a letter from the government saying that you are vulnerable patient, you should apply at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable> This enables you to have priority food deliveries. Shielding is recommended for 12 weeks commencing 30th March

What to do if you feel you have caught the virus

If you think you might be experiencing symptoms or have been exposed to the virus, you should:

- Phone NHS 111. Make sure you tell the person you speak to that you have leukaemia and are a high-risk patient.
- Inform your haematology care team so that they are aware.

Treatment

After discussion with you, your consultant may recommend deferring or delaying treatment if they feel it is in your best interest. Please do not stop any treatment for CLL without discussing this with your consultant or a member of their team first.

On behalf of the UK CLL Forum, we hope you will remain safe and well. The best way to do this is to follow the guidance above. We are working closely with CLL Support and Leukaemia Care to help you. Our web site is <https://ukcllforum.org/>

Stay Safe

Renata Walewska

Chair CLL Forum

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