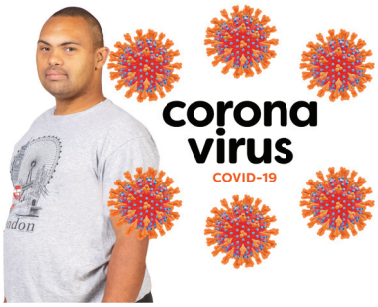
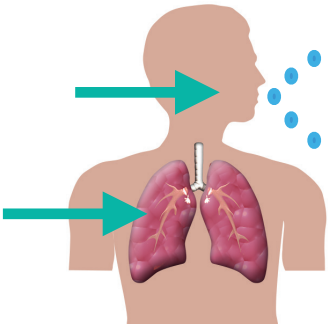
Department of Health & Social Care

Coronavirus: Why we have added people with Down's syndrome to the high risk list

About Coronavirus



Coronavirus is an illness. It is also called COVID-19.



It can affect your lungs and breathing.

Most people get a little bit ill with coronavirus, if they get it.

They will get better at home.

Some people get very ill with coronavirus and need to go to hospital.

Sadly, some people can die from coronavirus.

Doctors wrote a list of people who were more likely to become very ill.

The people on the list are called:
clinically extremely vulnerable

They need to do more than other people to try and stop themselves getting coronavirus.

What has been decided

Doctors have decided to put adults with Down's syndrome on the list.

This means if you have Down's syndrome you have a bigger chance of being very ill if you catch coronavirus.

What we have found out

We looked at health information from over 8 million people between January and June 2020.

Things we looked at:

- How old people were

- Gender. This means if you see yourself as male, female or something else

- Ethnic group. This means your race or culture

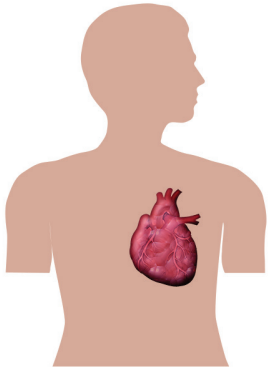
- Any illnesses people have had for a long time

- People who went into hospital with coronavirus

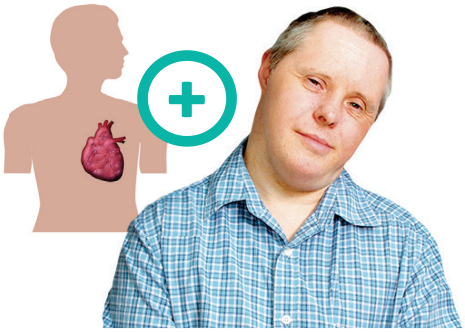
- People who died with coronavirus

Then we looked at people who were the same age and sex. Some people had Down's syndrome and some did not.

We found that people with Down's syndrome had more chance of being very ill if they caught coronavirus.



You may have a health condition that already makes your chance bigger. Like a heart problem.



Having Down's syndrome as well means you have an even bigger chance of being very ill.

Children with Down's Syndrome

We now know that children do not have a big chance of getting unwell with coronavirus.

We think that children with Down's syndrome **are not** more likely to be very ill with coronavirus.

People with a Learning Disability

We don't think having a learning disability means you have a bigger chance of being very ill if you catch coronavirus.

If you have a learning disability and a health problem, the health problem may make your chance bigger.

Only adults with Down's syndrome are being added to the list.

More Information

If you have Down's syndrome you may have got a letter from your doctor.

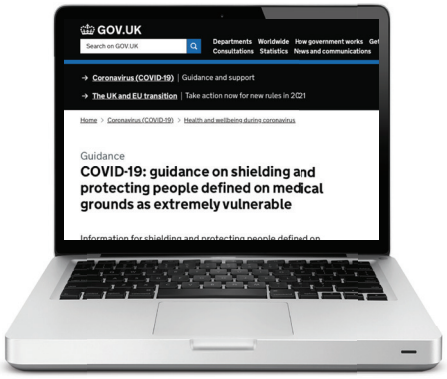
It will say you are on the list of people who may need extra help to stay safe from coronavirus.

Public Health England are writing an easy read guide.

It will tell you how to find support and what you need to do.

There is more information on the government's website.

It is not in easy read. You could ask someone you trust to help you.



Website

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

If you are reading this online you can click on the website and it will take you to the webpage.