

## Keeping safe at Christmas

Yet again we know that some of you are going to have to make some hard choices again about the how, where, and with whom you spend your Christmas safe from COVID, whilst trying to enjoy the festivities.

With the recent news of the new variant Omicron and cases of Covid rising daily we understand that your anxiety levels could be high. Our recommendation is to do what is comfortable for you, don't feel pressurised into conforming to other peoples' behaviours. Everyone deals with the risk posed by Covid in their own way, don't go out of your own comfort zone just to please others.

Here are our tips to staying safe:

- Keep up the mask wearing, social distancing and washing your hands regularly.
- Have good ventilation at home or when indoors.
- Work from home if possible. Please find a [letter](#) you can use to explain your situation to your employer.
- Look out for [signs and symptoms of COVID infection](#).
- Do regular lateral flow tests for yourself and close family members.
- If you test positive on a lateral flow test book a PCR test as soon as possible and contact your centre. A PCR will be needed for you to access treatment, such as anti-viral therapy and monoclonal antibody therapies [AccesstoCovidtreatments.pdf.pdf \(immunodeficiencyuk.org\)](#)
- Keep gatherings to a minimum. Ask others to do lateral flow testing before meeting up with you.
- Feel empowered to say no to invitations for events you don't feel comfortable attending.

**Stay safe and take care.**

## Looking after your mental health

Whilst Christmas is thought of as the season to be merry and bright, it can also be a time of loneliness and feelings of being over-whelmed to live up to the huge pressure to have a 'good time'. Due to COVID you may be unable to visit or see your loved ones in the usual way.

Many people do find Christmas difficult even in the absence of the worry of COVID; so, do look after your mental wellbeing. If you are spending Christmas alone, have a think about what you want to do beforehand and plan the day doing things that you most enjoy. Just be gentle and easy with yourself.

If you are worried, sad, or simply overwhelmed, under pressure about Christmas, don't be afraid to talk to someone about it. Have a chat to someone you trust. Read some useful articles from the mental health charity MIND on [how to cope at Christmas](#).