



Supporting someone with breathlessness

*A source of help and advice for family and friends supporting someone
with breathlessness due to COPD or cancer*

The 'Supporting Someone with Breathlessness' website was created to support friends and family of someone with breathlessness due to COPD or cancer. Given the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak we have created this additional guide on how to use the website if the person you are supporting may be recovering from Coronavirus (Covid-19).

If you are worried that the person you support is starting to develop Coronavirus (Covid-19) symptoms, please follow your health service's medical advice. This guide is not suitable for people with acute Coronavirus (Covid-19) symptoms and their carers.

This guide contains advice on how to use the website if:

- you are supporting someone who has breathlessness due to COPD or cancer who may be **recovering** from Coronavirus (Covid-19)
OR
- you are supporting someone who has breathlessness without COPD or cancer, that may be **recovering** from Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Coronavirus (Covid-19) and Breathlessness

Coronavirus causes an illness called Covid-19 that can be spread easily between people and can be serious. Coronavirus (Covid-19) can be especially dangerous for older people (over 60) and those with underlying medical problems, including COPD or cancer. Breathlessness can be a symptom of Coronavirus (Covid-19) and can be difficult to know how to manage.

If you are in the UK, please see the NHS website for [information about Coronavirus and how you can stop its spread](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/). Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>. If you are in the UK and you are concerned that the person you are caring for is developing Coronavirus (Covid-19) follow the national guidance and dial 111. If you are outside of the UK, please follow your country's advice for helping to stop the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19).

Coronavirus (Covid-19), breathlessness and stress

It is natural for both you and the patient to feel stressed and anxious during an outbreak like this. Stress can have an unhelpful impact on breathlessness. Our support topic [Stress, panic and breathlessness](#) on the website may be particularly helpful for patients and carers impacted by stress due to Coronavirus (Covid-19). Visit https://supporting-breathlessness.org.uk/support_generic/stress-panic-and-breathlessness/





If you are supporting someone with breathlessness due to COPD or cancer that may be recovering from Coronavirus (Covid-19):

Please use this website as normal, following the advice in our [How to use for carers of people with COPD or cancer guide](#) on our website but please be aware that:

- use of the handheld fan is not currently recommended during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, particularly in hospital, as it is thought that fans can risk spreading the virus – instead, cooling the patient’s face with a cool damp flannel is suggested
- you should follow national advice for helping to stop the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) and protecting yourself and the patient (e.g. staying at home, self-isolating, social distancing, washing your hands and avoiding touching your face).

Some useful links to other websites with extra information on Coronavirus (Covid-19):

- The British Lung Foundation has useful advice for [managing Coronavirus with a lung condition](#). Visit <https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/coronavirus>
- A team of breathlessness experts has produced some helpful advice for [managing breathlessness at home during the Coronavirus outbreak](#). Visit <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cicelysaunders/resources/khp-gp-breathlessness-resource.pdf>
- [Macmillan Cancer Support](#) and [Cancer Research UK](#) have advice for those living with cancer during the Coronavirus outbreak. For Macmillan Cancer Support, visit <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/coronavirus/cancer-and-coronavirus>. For Cancer Research UK, visit <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/coronavirus-and-cancer>
- Also see Carers UK for [information for unpaid carers supporting people during the Coronavirus outbreak](#). Visit <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19>
- Follow national advice for helping to stop the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) and protecting yourself and the patient

Please keep reading onto the next page








**If you are supporting someone with breathlessness without COPD or cancer,
that may be recovering from Coronavirus (Covid-19):**

Although this learning resource was created to support friends and family supporting someone with breathlessness due to COPD or cancer, there is also information in this resource that could be helpful for carers and people with breathlessness caused by Coronavirus where the patient doesn't have these underlying conditions.

The 'Support Topics' on our website, listed below may be useful for carers and people with breathlessness without COPD or cancer but that may be recovering from Coronavirus (Covid-19)

	<p><u>Stress, panic and breathlessness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Stress and breathlessness – an unhelpful cycle</u>
	<p><u>Looking after your own health</u></p>
	<p><u>What to expect in the future</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Talking about the future with others</u>• <u>When someone is close to dying</u>• <u>Talking to the healthcare team</u>• <u>When someone dies</u>

Some useful links to other websites with extra information:

- If you live in the UK, visit the NHS website for **information about Coronavirus and how you can stop its spread**. Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Also see Carers UK for **information for unpaid carers supporting people during the Coronavirus outbreak**. Visit <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19>
- Follow national advice for helping to stop the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) and protecting yourself and the patient

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