



# Keeping well during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: Three practical things you can do.

Looking after your everyday health during the COVID-19 pandemic is just as important as practising social distancing and good hygiene. Keeping up with your usual medical care including routine visits to your GP, tests and medicines, and seeking treatment early when needed, will help you stay well.



## 1. Maintain regular contact with your healthcare providers

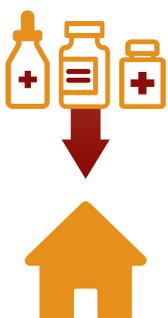
Continue to see all your regular healthcare providers during this time, especially if you have an ongoing physical or mental health condition. Your appointments can be face to face or if appropriate via telehealth. If you are feeling unwell with cold-like symptoms make sure you phone your GP and advise them of your symptoms.

Telehealth is a telephone or video consultation. It enables you to access essential health services from your home via a telephone call or a video call using a computer or phone app such as FaceTime, Skype, Zoom or WhatsApp.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, GPs, some medical specialists and a wide range of other health professionals are able to provide telephone and video consultations. Mental health and chronic disease management, home medicines reviews, and services provided by allied health professionals or a nurse practitioner can also be provided via telehealth. If necessary, your doctor can provide an after-hours service or prescribe a medicine and arrange for the prescription to be sent directly to your pharmacy.

These appointments are bulk-billed to eligible DVA clients under DVA payment arrangements. The new telehealth arrangements are in place until 30 September 2020, when they will be reviewed.

- ✔ **Talk to your regular healthcare providers about the most appropriate type of appointment for you, whether it should be via face-to-face or telehealth.**



## 2. Continue taking your medicines as prescribed

Take your medicines as prescribed by your doctor. If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines talk to your doctor or local pharmacist. A good way to access your medicines during the COVID-19 pandemic is to have your medicines delivered to your home.

Your pharmacy may already provide a home delivery service. To make sure that home delivery of medicines is available to more people, the Home





Medicines Service has been established by the Australian Government and is available from participating pharmacies across Australia.

If you are over the age of 70 years or are living with an ongoing medical condition you are eligible for the service.

To be funded under this scheme, each delivery needs to include a PBS or an RPBS medicine. You can also purchase other items from the pharmacy to be delivered at the same time as part of the same order.

How to order your medicines and the delivery times will vary between different pharmacies depending on the arrangements they have in place.

There is no cost to use this service once a month. If you need more than one delivery per month, you may be charged a delivery fee by your pharmacy.

**✔ Take your medicines as prescribed and contact your pharmacy to find out more about the Home Medicines Service.**

If you are in urgent need of one of your prescribed medicines and cannot see your doctor face to face or by telehealth to obtain a new prescription, talk to your pharmacist. There are emergency arrangements in place until 30 June 2020 that may help you access a one-off supply of your medicine without a prescription.



### **3. Get your influenza vaccination**

Now is the time to have your annual influenza vaccination if you haven't already done so. The vaccination is the best way to prevent you getting influenza and its complications.

Everyone over 65 years is eligible for a free seasonal influenza vaccination through the national immunisation program.

This year a stronger vaccine is available for people over 65 years. This vaccine is called Fludax<sup>®</sup> Quad and is only available from your GP.

Also, ask your GP if you need to have a pneumococcal vaccination.

**✔ If you haven't already had your influenza vaccination this year, book an appointment with your general practice surgery or local pharmacy.**

#### **Phone the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080**

This line is available if you need more information on coronavirus.

The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

#### **Phone 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) for DVA support and questions**

Information is also available at [www.dva.gov.au/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-information](http://www.dva.gov.au/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-information)

#### **Phone OPEN ARMS on 1800 011 046**

This line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for mental health and wellbeing support. Information is also available at [www.openarms.gov.au](http://www.openarms.gov.au)