Covid-19 Q&A for QMUL students
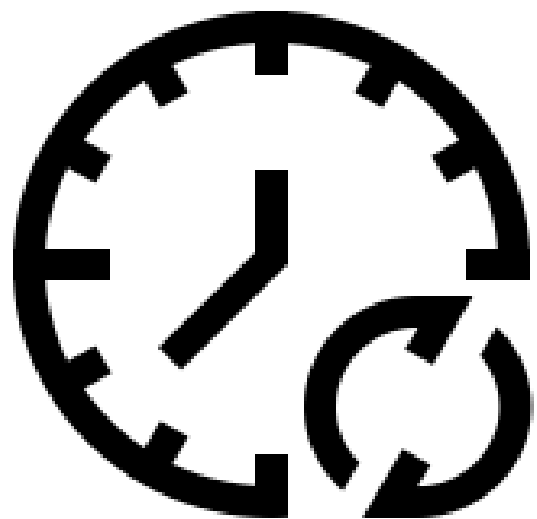
LBTH Public Health: Nicola Donnelly, Alexandra Staskova

QMUL: Desislava Chaneva, Magda Chanopoulou

25th November 2020

Content accurate at time of presentation - always refer to online guidance for latest information

Session content:

- Updates and Resources
- Covid-19 Prevention
- Support with Testing
- Winter Holidays
- Case Study
- Support with Self-isolation
- Emotional Support
- Questions and Answers

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Useful Websites

Public Health England:
https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/category/coronavirus-covid-19/

NHS England – page on Covid-19: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Government guidance and updates on Covid-19: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Tower Hamlets guidance, updates and resources on Tower Hamlets:
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/coronavirus

QMUL coronavirus advice and updates website: www.qmul.ac.uk/coronavirus/

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Keeping up to date

Tower Hamlets Covid-19 Community Champions

- a network launched to ensure our communities have access to the latest information and advice from a trusted source

- Regular webinars, newsletters including Questions and Answers and Whatsapp broadcasts for community champions, support sharing information with your groups

- Sharing key messages on current picture in Tower Hamlets, NHS Test and Trace and latest government guidance

- Information about resources and support available

- An opportunity to ask questions on behalf of your group and provide feedback, which will then inform service design

- For more info and to sign up, visit: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/covidchampions

Coronavirus updates - sign up to 'health and wellbeing - coronavirus'
https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/content_pages/online_services/Sign_up_to_our_newsletter.aspx

Covid-19 Prevention

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You are usually **infected but show no symptoms** for 5-6 days

You are usually **infectious** from 2 days before and 10 days after you first show symptoms

Recovery time varies, but is usually up to 2 weeks for mild cases

Main symptoms

Cough

Taste loss

Fever

Smell loss

Fatigue

Sore throat
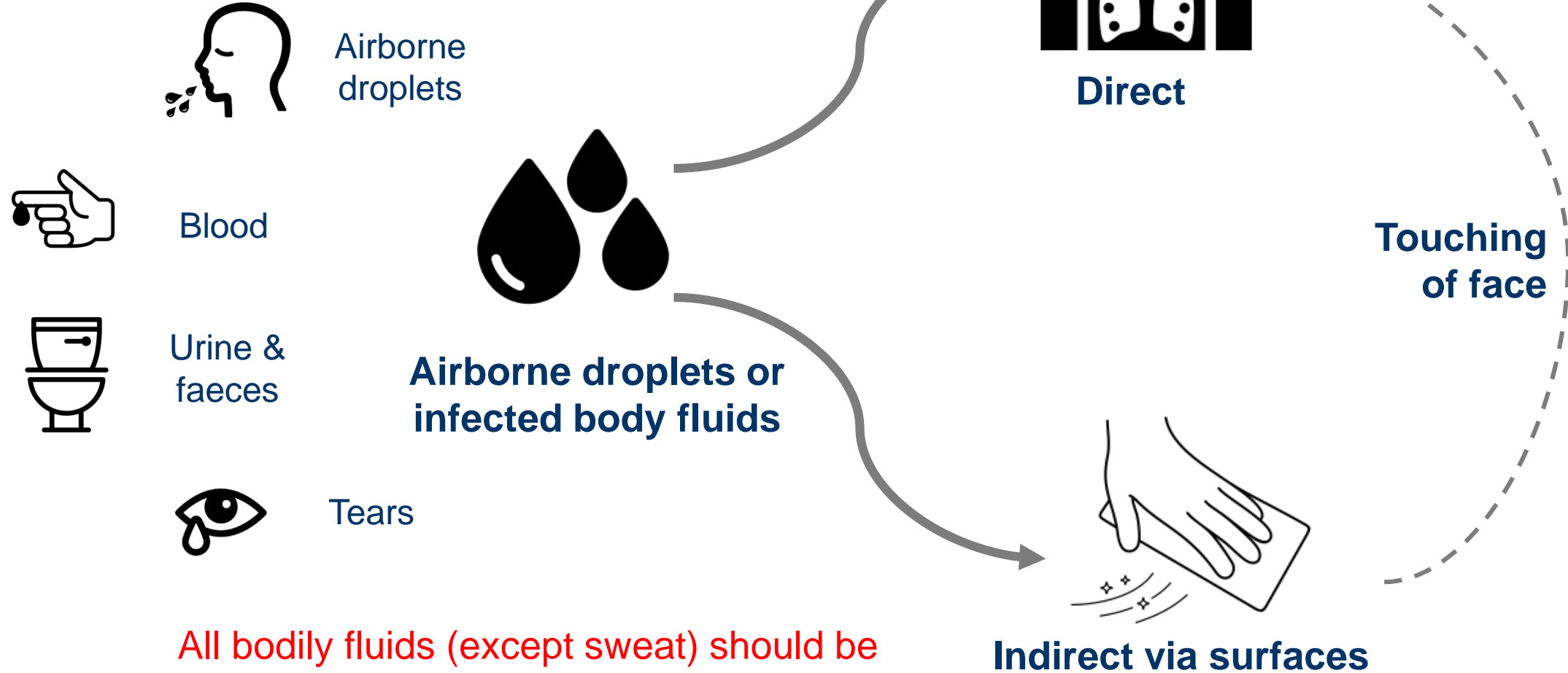
Headache

Muscle pain

Shortness of breath or chest tightness

How do you get Covid-19?

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Airborne droplets

Blood

Urine & faeces

Tears

Airborne droplets or infected body fluids

Direct

Touching of face

Indirect via surfaces

All bodily fluids (except sweat) should be regarded as potentially infectious

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Preventing the spread of Covid-19

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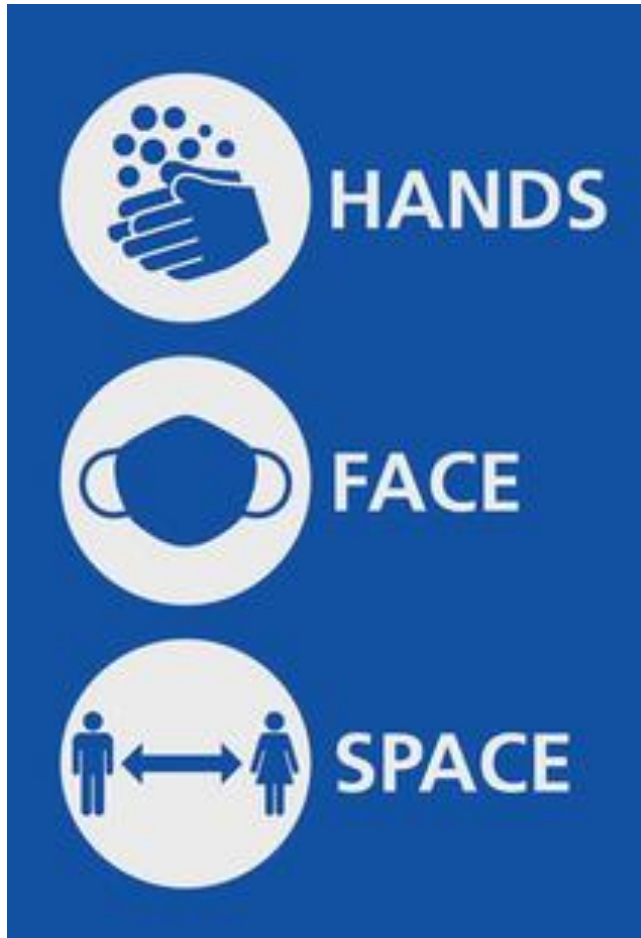
HANDS

FACE

SPACE

Watch Hands-Face-Space video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_N1rTPhv04

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Face Coverings

- Wear a face covering on **public transport**, in **shops** & **other enclosed areas**, where it is hard to socially distance

- Wear a face covering **correctly** for maximum protection:
- Don't put it around your neck, up on your forehead or hanging off your ear
- Don't touch it when on. Wash hands with soap and water before putting on and after removing
- If it gets damp – change it
- Carry it in a small bag (such as food/ zip-lock bag), to prevent contamination

- Choose a face covering that:
- Has two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric (avoid fabrics that make it hard to breathe)
- Completely covers your nose and mouth
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face leaving no gaps

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NHS Test and Trace

Download the phone app here:
https://apps.apple.com/us/app/id1520427663
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.nhs.covid19.production

It has a number of features:

Trace: find out when you've been near other app users who have tested positive for Covid-19.

Alert: lets you know the level of coronavirus risk in your postcode district.

Check-in: get alerted if you've visited a venue where you may have come into contact with coronavirus, using a simple QR code scanner. No more form filling.

Symptoms: check if you have coronavirus symptoms and see if you need to order a test.

Test: helps you order a test if you need to.

Isolate: keep track of your self-isolation countdown and access relevant advice.

Why is NHS Test and Trace so important?

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Test and Trace is important as it will help us **to protect ourselves and our communities** by reducing the spread of the infection through early identification and self isolation.

1	**Symptoms & Testing**	Early recognition and detection will allow you to reduce your contact with others as soon as possible
2	**Protecting our loved ones and others**	By letting others know they may have been in contact with someone who has the virus will allow them get tested and to protect their friends, families and colleagues
3	**Protecting our communities**	The more we protect others the more lives we save.

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- You will be contacted by an **app**, **email**, **text** or **phone**.

- Text messages will come from '**NHStracing**' and calls will come from **0300 0135000**.

- Children under 18 will be contacted by phone wherever possible and asked for their parent or guardian's permission to continue the call.

- The only website the service will ask you to visit is **https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk**.
  On the contact tracing website, you'll be asked for information including:

  - your name, date of birth and postcode

  - if you live with other people

  - any places you've been recently, such as a workplace or school

  - names and contact details of any people you were in close contact from 48 hours prior until 7 days after symptoms started (if you know these details)

  - if you cannot use the contact tracing website, you'll be asked for this information over the phone.

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Beware of scam - the NHS contact tracers will NEVER:

- Ask you for bank details or payments
- Ask you for details of any other accounts, such as social media
- Ask you to provide or set up a password/ PIN number over the phone
- Ask you to call a premium rate number, such as those starting 09 or 087
- Ask you to purchase a product – including a test
- Ask you to download any software to your device or ask you to hand over control of your device
- Ask you to access any website that does not belong to the Government or NHS.
- Ask you for anyone to visit you at home

- Share your details with your close contacts
- Inform your close contacts about who else has been in contact with you

All information is managed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018

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Support with Testing

Community testing (PCR) – if you have symptoms

Symptoms start

Immediately start isolating for 10 days

Household starts isolating for 14 days

Household members also isolate immediately as they are very likely to be infected too, if it is coronavirus

14 days as they may not yet be showing symptoms but still be infected

Book a PCR test (within the first 8 days after symptoms start)

Negative for COVID-19

Positive for COVID-19

Share contacts with NHS Test and Trace

Complete 10 days self-isolation

Household stops isolating immediately

Stop isolating if you feel well

AND

Inform studenthealth@qmul.ac.uk

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Who is a 'Close Contact'?

A 'close contact' is a person who has been in **close contact with** someone who has tested **positive** (confirmed Covid-19 case) while they were **infectious**.

- **Direct Contact** - Face-to-face contact (within 1 metre) - e.g, being coughed on, face to face conversation, skin to skin contact

- **Proximity Contact** - Being between 1 and 2 metres for more than 15 minutes

- **Household Contact** - Spending significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive

- **Travel Contact** - Travelling in a small vehicle together

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Community testing (PCR) – When to isolate and get tested

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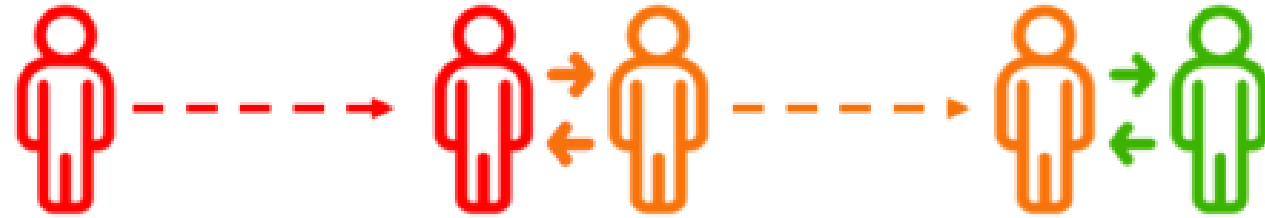
	Confirmed or suspected case	Contacts of case	Contacts of contacts
Isolate	Yes	Yes	No
Get tested	Yes (if suspected)	No (unless symptoms)	No (unless symptoms)

Community testing – How do I get a test

You need to get tested within the first 8 days of having symptoms. It is the most accurate within the first 5 days.

It is **FREE** for those with symptoms.

If you're ordering a home test kit, do it by 3pm on day 7.

Under 5s need a GP assessment – contact 111 or your child's GP.

Order Online
https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/antigen/name

OR

Call NHS 119

Book an appointment at a drive-through or walk-through test site.

Testing sites in Tower Hamlets:
Billingsgate Fish Market, E14 – drive/walk
Idea Store Watney Market, E1 – walk
Mile End Pavillion, E3 – walk
Jack Dash House, E14 – walk

Ask for a home test kit – this will be delivered to your home within 48hrs.

You will need to do the test and return the kit in the next 48 hours. Tests are returned by post. Priority Post boxes have been designated - find yours online.

What is Lateral Flow Testing?

A positive lateral-flow test, MUST be followed up by a PCR test
- this is because there's a high chance that you will test positive

It is possible that you have Covid-19, but test negative in lateral-flow test.

- This is because the result is dependent on the "viral load" (the amount of virus present).
- This is why it is useful to repeat the test within 3 days and travel soon after testing negative.

Results provided quite rapidly.

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Testing:

- voluntary

- for those without Covid-19 symptoms. **If you have any coronavirus symptoms, please AVOID the on-campus testing facilities as this would put other students and staff at significant risk.** If you have symptoms, you should visit an NHS Covid-19 testing facility or arrange for a postal test as soon as possible.

- targeted at students living on campus and students/staff who travel regularly to campus

- available at: Mile End, Whitechapel and Charterhouse Square

- a lateral flow test is quick and easy; results are provided quite rapidly.

For more information, please see QMUL guidance

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Winter Holidays

Travelling home safely for Winter Holidays
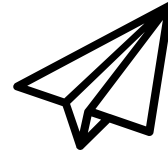
Government guidance for end of term

[Government travel home guidance](#) for university students:

- please aim to travel home after 2nd December
- if you test positive prior to departure, you must self-isolate for 10 days.
- please ensure you travel safely, follow hands-face-space. More info on travel guidelines: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#private-cars-and-other-vehicles

QMUL plans for the end of term

- the majority of education activities will be online from 9 December. Some in-person activity will continue – you will be notified if that applies to you.
- the university is officially closing on Friday 18th December for the Christmas holiday, with some facilities remaining open.

- Please seek more information via QMUL channels

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## Staying at QMUL for Winter Holidays

- The Student Health Service premises on campus will be closed, but the main site of our GP practice/contractor will be open during the Christmas break (not on bank holidays). Please see https://www.studenthealth.qmul.ac.uk/ for more information and closer to the winter holidays.

- For students living on campus: support will be available from our Residential Services and Support team. Contact residences-reception@qmul.ac.uk

- **Bookable study spaces** will be available every day throughout the holiday period.

- Other University-run campus facilities, including the **Mile End Library** and our **University-run catering outlets**, will also be open at specific times over the holiday period.

- We are working with the Students' Union to develop a calendar of activities, which will be modified as needed in the light of Government guidance.
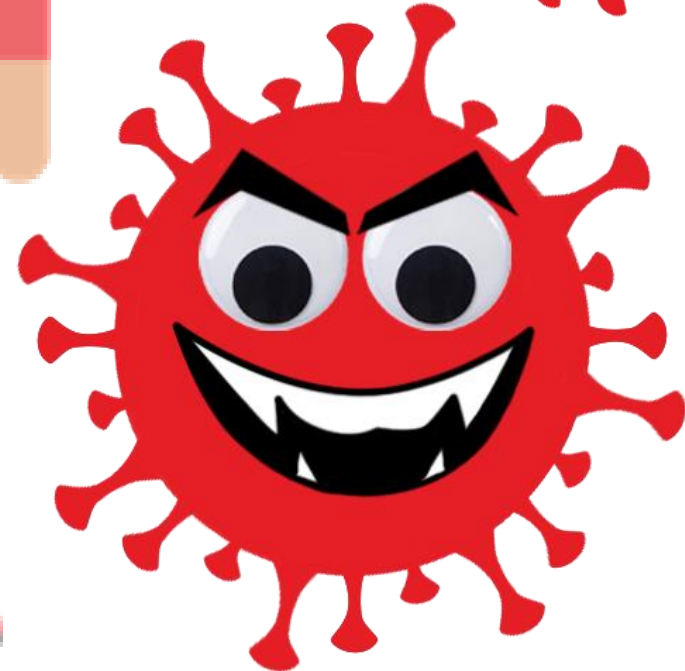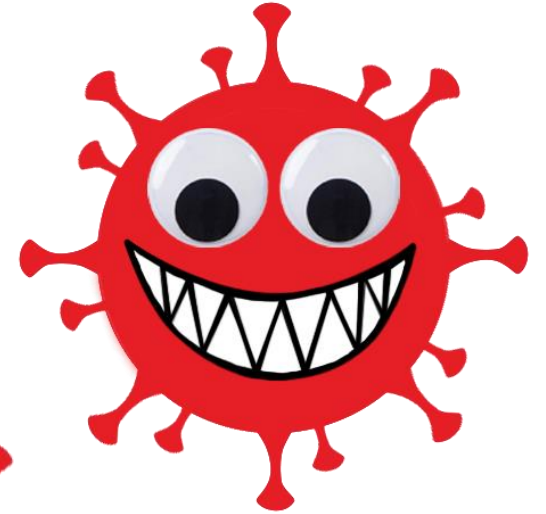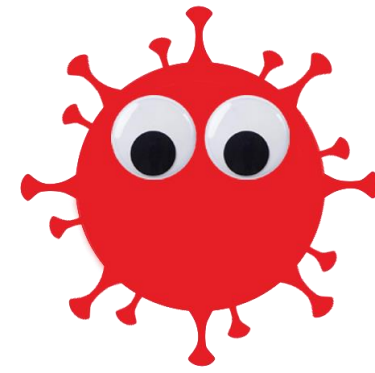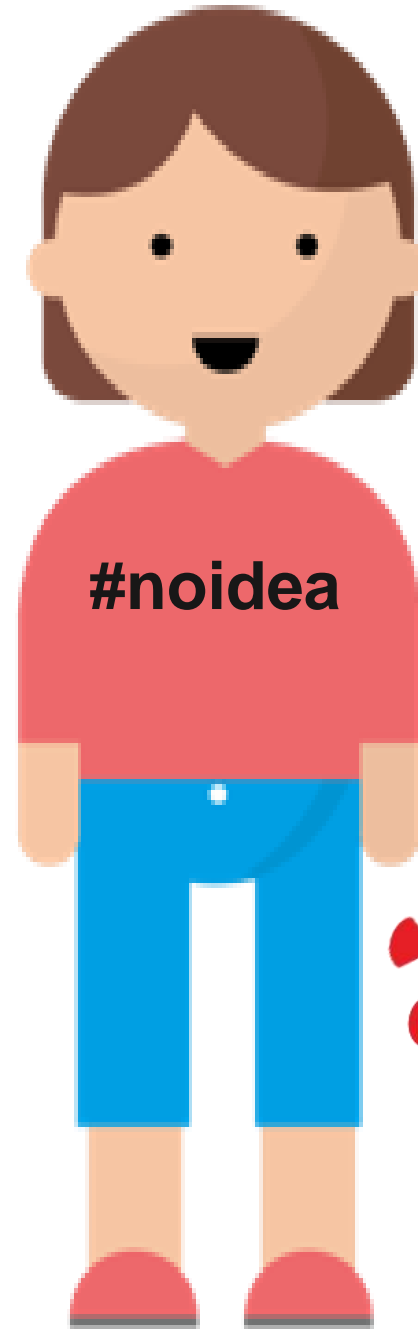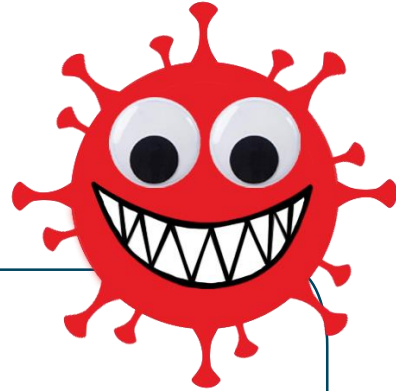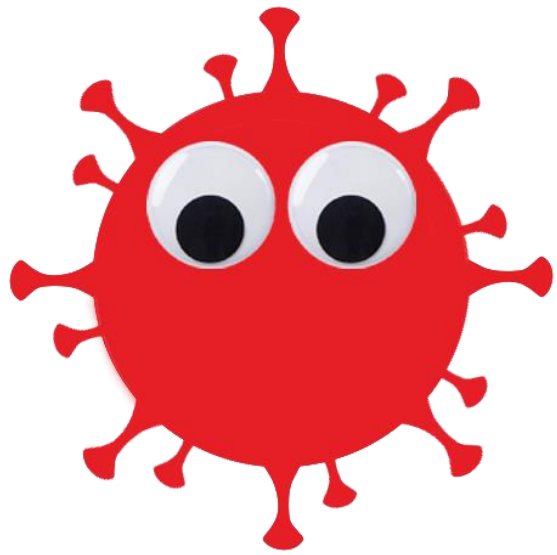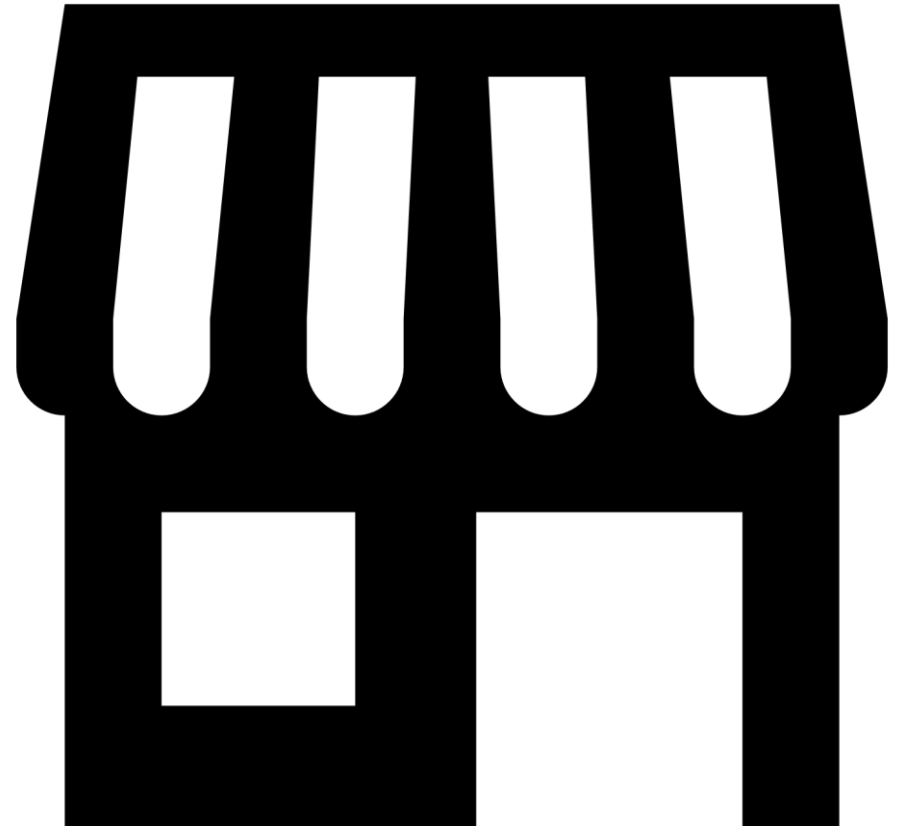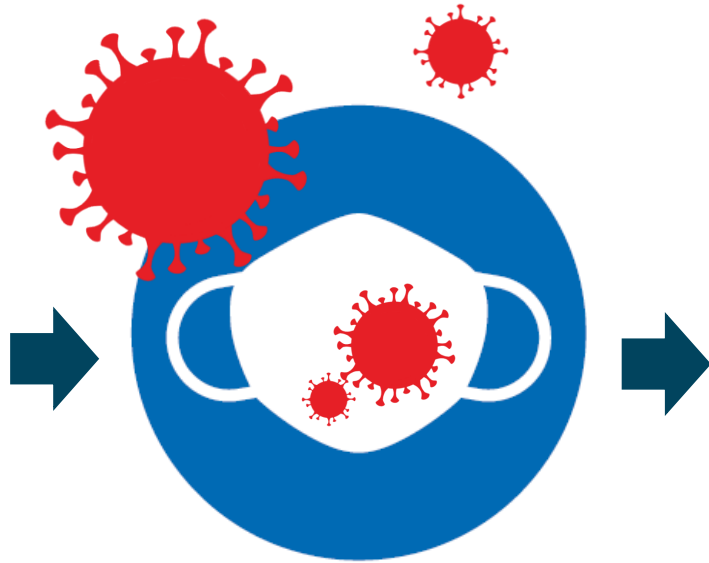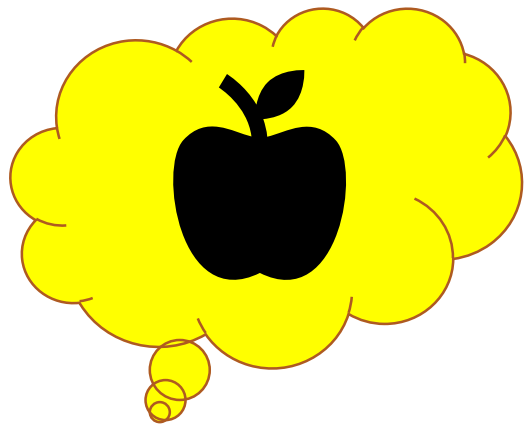
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Case Study

Tim and Lucy went to get some shopping.
Tim forgot his face covering. As a good friend, Lucy lent him the one she was wearing herself.
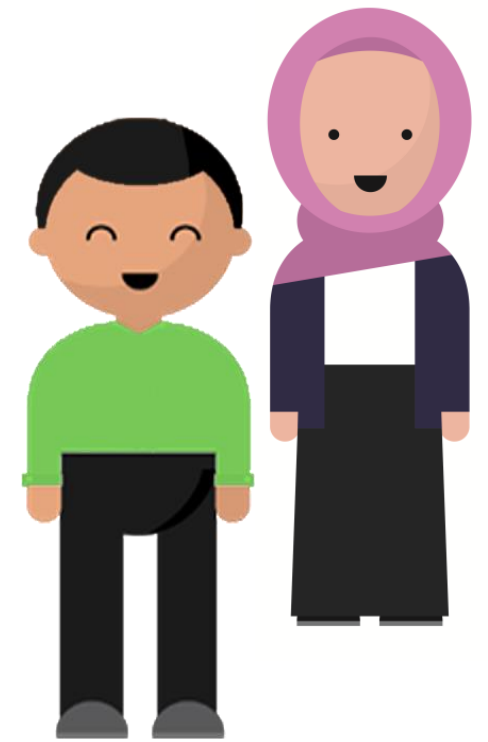Little did they know she also "lent" him Covid-19…

Wear a face covering or mask

Sammy is one of Tim's flatmates. He decided to break the self-isolation on a day 5 and meet his classmate to work on a project.

He has mild symptoms - has Covid, but hasn't realised it yet, because he also suffers from allergies.

They finished quite late, so Mas gave Sammy a lift home.

Neither of them wore a face covering in a car, because they felt a bit embarrassed to wear it where no one could see them.

Mas lives with his family in Tower Hamlets. His little brother has a health issue and is clinically extremely vulnerable.

Self-isolation - timeline

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
POSITIVE		Develops symptoms and starts self-isolating. Tested positive, so the rest of household need to isolate for 14 days. His isolation ends after 10 days, if well.																					
CLOSE CONTACT		Started isolating (as a close contact)				Develops symptoms, continues self-isolating. Tested positive; isolation ends after 10 days, if well.																	
CLOSE CONTACT		Never developed symptoms – needs to complete 14 days self-isolation. **IF** she tested negative in lateral-flow test, she might be able to travel home and isolate there.																					

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Self-isolation Support

How to self-isolate - DON'T
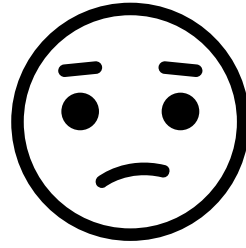
X leave your home or accommodation

X go to university, class or public places – work or study from home if you can

X use public transport or taxis

X go out to get food and medicine – order it online or by phone, or ask someone to bring it to your home and leave it at the door

X have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care

X go out to exercise – exercise at home or in your garden, if you have one

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How to self-isolate - DO

✓ stay on your own in one room as much as possible and keep the door closed

✓ avoid using shared spaces (such as the kitchen) at the same time as other people – eat your meals in your room

✓ use a separate bathroom if possible - otherwise, use the bathroom after everyone else and clean it each time you use it, for example, by wiping the surfaces you've touched

✓ wash your hands with soap and water often, for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available

✓ cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

✓ keep windows open in the room you're staying in and shared spaces

✓ consider wearing a face covering when in shared spaces as much as possible

✓ clean objects and surfaces you touch often (such as door handles, kettles and phones) using your regular cleaning products

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Self-isolation support available at QMUL

Residential Support – 24/7 for students with any concerns at all:
Contact: 020 7882 6470, **residences-reception@qmul.ac.uk**

Food provision
Travel Corridor Self Isolation: 2 weeks' food provided free of charge to facilitate an immediate start to your self-isolation (subject to submission of 'The arrive safe form').

Any other Covid-19 Self Isolation:
- Please **use your existing provision** first
- If inadequate, **ask your Covid-19 companion for help** (another resident of the same building but a different flat).
- If you don't have a Covid-19 companion, **purchase food from QM catering e-shop** (will be delivered to your room): https://residentialsupport.qmul.ac.uk/queen-mary-food-meals-to-your-door_128255
- If none of these options are viable, please contact Residential Support: residences-reception@qmul.ac.uk

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Self-isolation support available in Tower Hamlets

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

More information here:
- https://www.gov.uk/extra-money-pay-university/university-and-college-hardship-funds

- https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights/discrimination-at-work

NHS VOLUNTEER RESPONDERS

NHS Volunteer Responders can help with things like:
- collecting shopping, medicines and prescriptions
- phone calls if you want to chat to someone

Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm, everyday) to arrange help from a volunteer.

TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL

Advice for residents on financial issues and support, food and medication deliveries.

Helpline: **0207 364 3030**
Online form: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/selfisolation

NHS Test and Trace Support Payment:
https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health__social_care/health_and_medical_advice/Coronavirus/Support_for_residents/Benefits_and_financial_support.aspx

Emotional Support

The Counselling Service at ACS - face to face, online or telephone counselling appointments to students at QMUL. If you would like to speak with one of their counsellors, please contact them at: https://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/opening-times-and-contact-us/.

Be Kind To Your Mind - Students' Union has some helpful tips to stay connected and healthy on their Be Kind To Your Mind campaign pages.

Student Space - an online resource hub for university students; offer confidential, free support from trained volunteers:
FREE helpline **0808 189 5260** (daily 4-11pm,) 24/7 text support (text **'STUDENT' to 85258**); webchat

Togetherall for 24/7 online support and resources for looking after yourself during the Coronavirus outbreak (requires self-registration/login but it is available to our students and staff - use your Queen Mary email address).

Resources on QMUL website: https://residentialsupport.qmul.ac.uk/healthandwellbeing/coronavirus
https://www.studenthealth.qmul.ac.uk/mental-health/covid-19-and-your-wellbeing

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Emotional Support available in Tower Hamlets

- **FREE 24/7 mental health helplines**:

  Tower Hamlets Mental Health Crisis Line: Free Phone **0800 073 0003**

  Samaritans: **116 123**

  If you or someone else are in an emergency, don't hesitate to call **999!**

- Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help

- NHS psychological therapies service (IAPT) – for anyone registered with a GP in England

- MIND – Connecting Communities project can help you find the service to support your mental health. Online resources and activities available via MIND website. ConnectingCommunities@mithn.org.uk

- **Community Navigators (Public Health)** can help you connect with local services, befriending schemes and activities, to support your health and wellbeing.

  Email navigators@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

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Emotional Support – Self-help

- [Student Mind](#) provides useful tips and guidance, to support students in staying mentally healthy in student life.

- [Good thinking](#) an NHS approved mental health platform; support if you are anxious, stressed, depressed or having trouble sleeping because of coronavirus.

- [Mindkit.org](#) contains top tips on five ways to increase happiness. Connect, be active, keep learning, help others and take notice.

- [Every Mind Matters](#) gives information about looking after your mental health

- [Mindout](#) mental Health Charity for LGBTQ community providing online mental health support service.

- [Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets](#) - help yourself feel better by helping others

- Online resources and links on Tower Hamlets council website: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health__social_care/health_and_medical_advice/Coronavirus/Coronavirus_stay_at_home_resources](#)

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