

# COCOONING

If you are at home caring for a person living with dementia, it is likely you are experiencing less social contact as a result of the measures taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

It is really important to keep you and the person you are caring for as physically and mentally active as you possibly can while at home.

We have prepared a collection of resources which you might find helpful during these times of uncertainty.

We hope that you find the resources we have listed useful. We have no affiliation with any of the providers/organisations and we apologise for any omissions.

We are all in this together and can all play a part in this effort in our communities.

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Dementia Services Information and Development Centre  
May 2020



**DSiDC**

Dementia Services Information and Development Centre

# COCOONING

Cocooning means staying at home and avoiding face-to-face contact at all times, with practical and emotional support from family, neighbours, carers and the community.

Cocooning is protective for you and others.

## Who should cocoon?

- Everyone over the age of 70
- People of any age with severe respiratory conditions like COPD and asthma
- People with specific cancers and;
- those taking medications that suppress the immune system

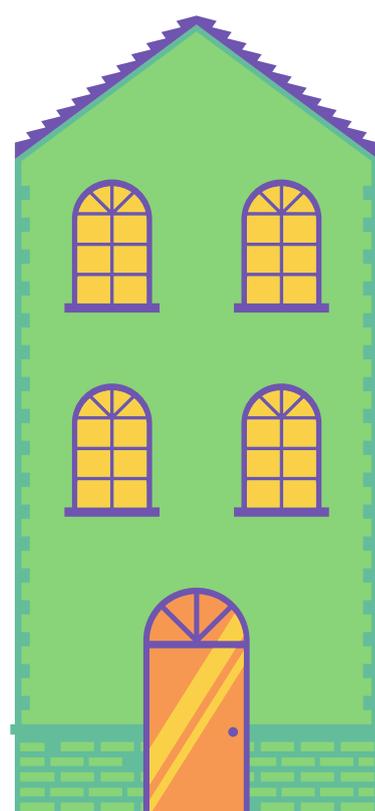
Check out this [video](#) for more information

## Why do I need to cocoon?

Because if you are in one of the above categories you are more susceptible to catch the virus and less able to fight it off.

It is for your personal protection.

There is no cure and no vaccine for Covid19 at the moment.



## How long do I need to cocoon?

You will need to cocoon for as long as the Government advises.

## How do I cocoon?

You should stay at home and avoid at all times face-to-face contact. Even within your home, you should minimise all non-essential contact with other members of your household.

Ask your family, carers or neighbours for help to ensure you have the support you need. You can also get help while cocooning through your local county council.

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### ***Important note.***

While people with dementia may be under 70 years of age and have no other health problems, they also may be less able to adhere to Covid social distancing measures. Hence the advice for cocooning may be relevant for them.



Here is a list of the restrictions and some practical suggestions as to what you might do instead.



### You cannot

Walk or drive to **shop** for food, drink, medicines, clothes, coal, a newspaper, etc.



### You can

Ask a friend, family member, neighbour, carer to run errands for you and drop them at your doorstep.

Order to get your shopping delivered.

If there isn't anybody that can shop for you, ring your local Community Response Forum for advice.

<https://tinyurl.com/tpf73pm>





## You cannot

Walk or drive to the bank, doctor (\*), post office, pharmacy, launderette or any other public or private outlets/services.



## You can

Ask a friend, family member, neighbour, carer to run errands for you.

If there is nobody who can support you, ring your local Community Response Forum below and find out available services to help during this time.

<https://tinyurl.com/tpf73pm>

AnPost will hold all payments for up to 90 days. You can also nominate an agent to collect on your behalf. All main retail Banks have set up helplines to offer advice and assistance to customers. Ring your branch for details.

(\* ) If you need medical help you should **telephone** your GP, or if very urgent, ring the emergency services on 999 or 112.

If you have a personal alarm you can press the button for help.



## You can



**From the 5th May 2020** you can go out for a short walk for exercise beyond your garden or yard. You can also drive a short distance, alone. If you choose to go for a walk you should:

- \*Strictly adhere to 2 metres physical distancing measures
- \*Avoid other people as much as possible
- \*Avoid touching people or surfaces
- \*Wash your hands on returning home

If you choose not to go out, you can

Open doors and windows twice a day to let the air in and freshen up the atmosphere.

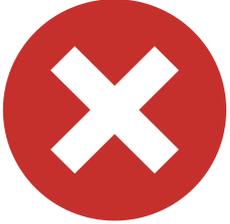
Go out to your balcony, yard or garden, if you have them, to spend time outside for fresh air.

If you don't have a yard or garden you can try to fit into your routine a set of exercises to do indoors.

Click on the following link for suggestions on exercise:

<https://tinyurl.com/vtueekk>





## You cannot

Meet people, whether individually, in groups, at gatherings or celebrations.

Ask people to come and visit you **inside** your home.



## You can

Receive visits for healthcare, personal support and social care, if the visitors do not have any Covid 19 symptoms.

If you have next door neighbours you can talk to them over the fence, boundary wall or window to window but always keeping to the 2 metres distance.

Use the telephone to ring family and friends. If you have access to a device to make video calls, follow the link below for advice on how to make those.

<https://tinyurl.com/vtueekk>

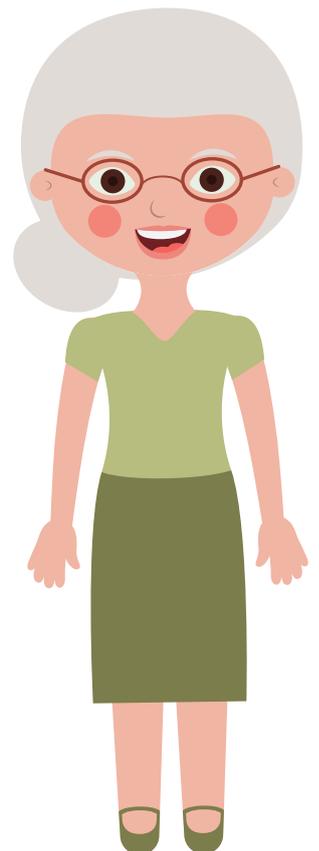
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## How to remain well while cocooning.

The key to cocooning successfully is to keep within your routines as much as possible. For example:

- Get up at the same time.
- Follow your usual breakfast routine.
- Get dressed – resist the temptation to remaining in your pyjamas or nightdress!
- Continue with your daily hygiene routine, make up and shaving.
- At the time that you usually would have been out of the house, plan some **activity** which requires physical movement.
- Try to plan for a few days or a week in advance.
- In-between physical activity plan cognitive activities (such as reading, puzzles or jigsaws) and rest time.
- This link will take you to a [weekly activity planner](https://tinyurl.com/vtueekk) which may be useful:  
<https://tinyurl.com/vtueekk>
- The [Alzheimer Society of Ireland](https://alzheimer.org.uk) has great ideas for activities in their factsheets on the following link:  
<https://tinyurl.com/rjh3qs6>



- If you are caring for a person with dementia try to be flexible and go with the person's mood rather than rigidly sticking to a plan.
- It is important that you plan balanced meals. Eating well will pay off. Involve the person with dementia in the food preparation and tidying up if possible.
- Lastly, avoid overloading with virus related news and updates. These can be upsetting.

## **If you are living with other people who are not cocooning.**

You need to keep at least 1 metre of distance from them.

Use different towels, cloths, cutlery.  
Sleep in different rooms and beds.  
Use different toilets and bathrooms if you can.

Wash your hands regularly with soap and water and disinfect everything that is in communal areas of the house e.g. handles, light switches, doorknobs, remote controls.

For more information visit this HSE website <https://tinyurl.com/wq4e99x>



## What if the person with dementia does not want to stay in?

It is a difficult time for those with memory and cognition difficulties. People with dementia may not understand why they should remain indoors. They may initially agree but then forget the circumstances of the virus. It is important to know that we cannot restrict the liberty of the person with dementia and lock them in or otherwise restrain them.

If behaviours escalate you can go out with the person with dementia for a little while, for a walk or short drive, keeping to the 5km radius. Do not be worried about being out if you need to. If stopped by the Guards, you should explain your circumstances calmly and clearly. Insisting that the person remains indoors could lead to negative consequences with a change in mood and can cause unnecessary stress.

We understand that cocooning is very difficult.

Call the Alzheimer National Helpline on **1800 341 341** who will offer practical information and emotional support about dementia

