

## Anxiety of the Clinically Vulnerable

For many across the UK, the gradual easing of lockdown restrictions is a welcome sight. People have been longing for a return to some form of normality, being able to socialise with friends, play sports, go to bars have been at the top of peoples priority lists. However, for many others, the lifting of lockdown restrictions has brought on a wave of anxiety.

For those that are clinically vulnerable, the lifting of lockdown restrictions doesn't mean life will return to how it was, the threat of COVID-19 hasn't vanished so time is needed to adapt. So as the lockdown restrictions are eased there are some things to consider to help ease anxiety as things open up.

### Recognise that you have choices

Some things like going back to work have an added layer of concern if you're clinically vulnerable to COVID-19. You may be thinking, my life is going to come to a standstill, I'm not going to be able to do anything anymore! Don't forget that there are options for everything. When it comes to working for example, things have changed so much now, employers have seen the new ways in which we can work, so if you're clinically vulnerable have that conversation with your employer to see what can be agreed moving forwards. There are plenty of options to be explored and you can discuss what may work best for your situation.

### Give yourself time

Don't be pressured into things that you do not feel comfortable with. If you're worried for your safety in a social situation for example, then communicate with others involved. They will be understanding of your situation and should be happy to accommodate any adjustments where possible. By doing what is right for you will help you to feel more in control and help to reduce anxieties you may be experiencing around such situations.

### Take small steps

Similar to giving yourself time, make sure you ease out of things at your own pace. Many people across the world are experiencing different levels of anxiety around the easing of restrictions so everyone will move at their own pace. Do what you feel safe doing and try not to let anxieties hold you back too much. Of course, your safety comes first but if you're finding high anxiety levels are holding you back try taking small steps to slowly become more and more comfortable in a certain situation. This will build confidence and help to reduce anxiety.

## Remember that you're not alone

Although it may seem the world is against you right now, it is important to remember that there are many people in similar situations to you dealing with similar anxieties and difficulties. Try not to be too hard on yourself if you're struggling, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a very difficult time for many people across the world.

## Useful links

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/coronavirus/tips-to-cope-with-anxiety-lockdown-lifting/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/looking-after-your-mental-health-we-come-out-lockdown>

<https://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/covid-19-support/how-to-manage-feelings-of-anxiety-as-lockdown-eases/>

## More information

If you would like to view the Webinar on '**Anxiety of the clinically vulnerable**' this is being delivered live on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August at 12:00pm**, please use the following link to register for this session -

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7644101021385481741>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.

If you feel you may need some support, you can contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.