Be alert to scammers and fraudsters

The tips we’ve shared may seem frightening, but they’re simply there to help you be aware of some of the tricks used by scammers and fraudsters.

We’re all in this together and although it’s important to stay alert to potential scams, it’s also important to remind ourselves that most people are genuinely trying to help.

Support is available

You aren’t alone. Victim Support are here to support you, and we will continue to do so throughout this difficult time. You can call our free confidential Supportline on 08 08 16 89 111, or visit victimsupport.org.uk

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Be wary of any emails saying they are from official sources which ask for money

Scammers are getting in touch with people, and claiming to be from health organisations such as the Centre for Disease Control, World Health Organisation or public health bodies. Do not respond to these emails or do as they request. Remember:

Any requests for payment are a sign that this is a scam

They might claim to have a list of people in the local area who are infected, at a cost. Public bodies such as this would never ask for money for information. Any information they make available to the public is free of charge.

Your personal information is valuable

Remember, any data provided to scammers could be used at a later date to try and trick you out of money. Be careful with what you provide, and to whom.

Don’t respond to offers of medication and health screening

In some countries there has been an increase in scammers claiming they have access to a vaccine, treatment or cure for the virus – of course, at a cost.

There is currently no vaccine against coronavirus, and no specific treatment or medication available. Any offers of a treatment or vaccine available privately at a cost will likely be a scam.

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If something seems too good to be true, it probably is

The outbreak of coronavirus has seen shops run out of lots of supplies such as hand sanitiser, face masks and toilet paper. As a result of shortages you might be shopping online, perhaps for the first time. To keep you as safe as possible follow the tips below, and remember if something seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Look for a name you know
You can generally trust the larger supermarket chains, but make sure you're on their real website. This will generally end in .co.uk or .com

Take a look at the reviews before buying
Before you buy on smaller websites, do some research. Check if they have positive reviews for their website, and how long they have been selling online. If they have only just started selling and they have no reviews there is a higher chance it could be a scam.

Check the price is about right
Look out for sellers offering prices at well below the normal retail price. If it's too good to be true, it probably is.

Seek advice from others
If you're not sure, ask a trusted family member or friend for advice before buying.