

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Journalist query -- UKPHA versus NIMS versus ONS
Date: 16 November 2021 16:38:49

Forwarding this media enquiry. All others that I am copied into, you have also been copied into.

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol
+ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk
| www.ons.gov.uk | [@ONS](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 November 2021 09:30
To: Health Data <Health.Data@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Journalist query -- UKPHA versus NIMS versus ONS

Hello [REDACTED]

Yes, that is correct, we only count people who appear in both the 2011 census AND 2019 GP patient register and that avoids counting people who are on the GP register but don't live in the country or have died but are still registered. It means that we start from a population of known people, and join on their vaccination statuses, whether vaccinated or not, rather than knowing only the vaccinated people and calculating the size of the unvaccinated population from the total population (which is very different whether using NIMS or ONS population estimates).

Yes, a limitation is that with the 2011 Census being so long ago we won't include people who have moved out of the country since then. This affects the lower aged adult age groups the most. Overall we cover approx. 79% of the population in England ages 10 years and over and approx. 86% of the deaths in England that occurred between 2 January and 24 September 2021.

The ONS populations are mid-year estimates based on the 2011 Census, and the NIMS populations are the number of people registered with the NHS, which is an overestimate of the population, and are updated weekly. I don't know the details on how the ONS population estimate is calculated, maybe someone from the population team can help? UKHSA have published more information on the two population estimates [here](#) (page 14).

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

+ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk
| www.ons.gov.uk | [@ONS](#)

From: Health Data <Health.Data@ons.gov.uk>
Sent: 02 November 2021 07:11
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Journalist query -- UKPHA versus NIMS versus ONS

Good morning [REDACTED]

Would you mind taking a look at this media enquiry please?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 01 November 2021 17:17
To: Health Data <Health.Data@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Journalist query -- UKPHA versus NIMS versus ONS

Hello,

I have a question about the figure that you use to estimate the population of England when calculating ASMR (such as in today's [release](#)).

My understanding of the public health data asset (from table 7 of the release) is that you only count people who appear in both the 2011 census AND GP patient register. So this is not the same as the NIMS data used in the UKHSA releases and, while it may be a bit out of date because it relies on the 2011 census, at least avoids the issue of double counting that you get by using NIMS. Am I understanding this correctly?

Separately, could you explain the difference between Population in NIMS (NIMS total population) and Population in NIMS (ONS total population)? How does the ONS arrive at this figure?

Thank you!

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]

[The Wall Street Journal](#)

[REDACTED]

E: [REDACTED]
A: The News Building, 1 London Bridge Street, London, SE1 9GF

[REDACTED]

Statistical bulletin

1 November 2021

Deaths involving COVID-19 by vaccination status, England: deaths occurring between 2 January and 24 September 2021

Weekly age-standardised mortality rates and age specific rates for deaths involving COVID-19 by vaccination status; deaths occurring between 2 January and 24 September 2021 in England.

Main points

- Between 2 January and 24 September 2021, the age-adjusted risk of deaths involving COVID-19 was 32 times greater in unvaccinated people than in fully vaccinated individuals.
- The weekly age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs) for deaths involving COVID-19 were consistently lower for people who had received two vaccinations compared to one or no vaccinations.
- Age-standardised mortality rates take into account differences in age structure and population size to allow comparisons between vaccination status groups, however some differences between the groups such as health status may remain and partly explain the differences in ASMRs.

Commenting on today's findings, the ONS' Charlotte Bermingham said:

"This study provides important evidence that fully vaccinated individuals have a lower risk of dying of COVID-19 than unvaccinated individuals, taking into account differences in the ages of vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

"However, care must be taken in attributing differences in mortality to the effects of the vaccine. Other factors can influence the mortality rates such as differences in the health of unvaccinated and vaccinated people."

[Go to our release](#)

Vital ONS data on COVID-19

Details of all of the statistics and analysis the ONS is producing on the prevalence and impact of COVID-19 and the UK's vaccine rollout can be found at [ONS.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.ons.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Please note the ONS is still [publishing market sensitive releases at 07:00](#). Other statistics are being released at 09:30 as usual.

Follow our latest news and get an insight into the work behind the numbers by following [@ONSfocus](#) on Twitter.

To arrange broadcast or print interviews, please contact Media Relations on **0845 604 1858** or **0203 684 5070** or email Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk

From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
To: [REDACTED]@fullfact.org>
Subject: RE: 32,000 times more likely to die if not double jabbed
Date: 19.11.2021 13:16:00 (+01:00)

That is correct.

From: [REDACTED]@fullfact.org>
Sent: 19 November 2021 12:04
To: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: 32,000 times more likely to die if not double jabbed

Sorry [REDACTED],

One more question. Are age standardised mortality rates used to calculate age adjusted risk of death, and therefore would it be correct to say "Because most causes of death vary significantly with people's age, using age adjusted risk of death involves using standardised death rates so that they are more comparable"?

Many thanks again,
[REDACTED]

On Fri, 19 Nov 2021 at 11:34, [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED],

I'd not seen that!

It's very much 32 times, as highlighted in our recent article.

We've also published a blog today on the subject and ASMRs.

<https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2021/11/19/coronavirus-deaths-understanding-ons-data-on-mortality-and-vaccination-status/>

Trust that helps?
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@fullfact.org>
Sent: 19 November 2021 11:28
To: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: 32,000 times more likely to die if not double jabbed

Good afternoon,

I am a Health Fellow from Full Fact, the UK's independent fact checking organisation.

We are looking into a recent claim that the Daily Mail Journalist [REDACTED] made on the [Jeremy Vine on 5 show](#), where he said: "Theres figures from the office of national statistics that say, what is it? You're 32,000 times more likely to die if you've not been double jabbed from Covid".

Are you aware of any ONS publication that would give this type of figure?

I wondered if perhaps it was a miscommunication of [this ONS report](#) - which says that *"the age-adjusted risk of deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19) was **32 times** greater in unvaccinated people than in fully vaccinated individuals"* rather than 32,000 times greater, but wanted to check if there were any others that you may be aware of.

Would you be able to offer a statement on this?

We are hoping to publish the piece this afternoon, so would be really grateful to hear back from you today.

Many thanks,

[Redacted]

--

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Full Fact

fullfact.org

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[Redacted]

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From: [REDACTED]@reachplc.com>
To: **Media Relations** <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Breakthrough death data
Date: 11.11.2021 16:33:42 (+01:00)

Thanks for this [REDACTED] - just to double check, where the explanation says that 640 people who were fully vaccinated died from coronavirus with 256 of those being breakthrough deaths, does that mean the other approx. 400 died having been already diagnosed with Covid-19 before being vaccinated?

On Thu, 11 Nov 2021 at 12:53, Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED],

I'm afraid the data is just national at the moment. Please see our latest [Deaths involving COVID-19 by vaccination status](#) release which is for deaths occurring between 2 January and 24 September 2021 in England.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@reachplc.com>
Sent: 11 November 2021 11:38
To: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Breakthrough death data

Morning,

Hope you're all well.

Might you have any localised figures for breakthrough deaths - where people have died after having both jabs - at all? Specifically, I'm looking for Greater Manchester data.

I've got some figures already from the ONS, but they're national and from Jan to July. Is there any chance there's more up to date data?

Many thanks

--

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED]

e: [REDACTED]@reachplc.com

t: @ [REDACTED]

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Manchester Evening News | [REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED]

e: [REDACTED]@reachplc.com

t: @ [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
To: media@hereshow.ie <media@hereshow.ie>
Subject: RE: fact-checking
Date: 22.11.2021 12:20:16 (+01:00)

Hi [REDACTED] – we've just made a couple of suggestions...

The age-standardised death rates per 100,000 person-years for the year so far are **between** 850 for unvaccinated people and 26 for fully vaccinated people; that's not an exact measure of vaccine effectiveness because **other factors affect the mortality rates such as** the interaction of different vaccination levels which are obviously going up through the year, and infection rates in the population which are going up and down in different months, **as well as the differing characteristics of people who are vaccinated or not due to the selective vaccine roll-out**, but it gives a clear picture that there is a huge difference in the outcomes depending on whether you are vaccinated or not.

Does that make sense?

[REDACTED]

From: media@hereshow.ie <media@hereshow.ie>
Sent: 22 November 2021 08:47
To: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: fact-checking

Many thanks [REDACTED]

On the podcast we make a huge effort to represent the stats in a correct and valid way.

Would it be correct journalistically to say

Age-standardisation is important because at different times age groups had different vaccination and infection rates. What age-standardisation does is it adjusts the figures to take out any distorting effects of one age-cohort being over-represented and another being under-represented, so the comparison is a more valid like-for-like.

The age-standardised death rates per 100k for the year so far are between 850 for unvaccinated people and 26 for fully vaccinated people; that's not an exact measure of vaccine effectiveness because of the interaction of different vaccination levels which are obviously going up through the year, and infection rates in the population which are going up and down in different months, but it gives a clear picture that there is a huge difference in the outcomes depending on whether you are vaccinated or not.

: -)

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 November 2021 09:09
To: media@hereshow.ie
Cc: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: fact-checking

Hi [REDACTED],

The Daily Mail article is based on this bulletin, below, out earlier this month. It will be updated, with a more up to date time frame, in early December.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsinvolvedwithcovid19byvaccinationstatusengland/deathsoccurringbetween2januaryand24september2021>

A blog here explains what can be interpreted from the data:

<https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2021/11/19/coronavirus-deaths-understanding-ons-data-on-mortality-and-vaccination-status/>

Trust that helps?

From: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>

Sent: 22 November 2021 07:04

To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk)>

Cc: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: fact-checking

Morning [REDACTED],

Is this one for you or the CIS team?

Regards

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | Office for National Statistics
| Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol
Cardiff Road, Newport, NP10 8XG | Tel: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk)> | Web: www.ons.gov.uk | Twitter: [@ONS](https://twitter.com/ONS)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 November 2021 06:02
To: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: fact-checking

Hello, I hope you can help me with a brief fact-check.

I note that the [Daily Mail is reporting](#)

“Office for National Statistics covering the period from January to September 2021: they showed that, adjusted for age, the mortality rate for the unvaccinated with Covid-19 was 849.7 per 100,000, compared with 26.2 per 100,000 for those who were 'fully vaccinated'. More simply: the unvaccinated had an infection mortality rate 32 times higher.”

Can you confirm that these figures are correct and a fair representation of the facts? Is the time period long enough? Are different timespans, or other variables likely to yield a different result?

Many thanks

Regards,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

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From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
To: [REDACTED]@independent.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Press enquiry - The Independent
Date: 10.11.2021 17:38:59 (+01:00)

Afternoon [REDACTED],

I'm afraid you are correct with your concern. It should be out of 100,000 person years as the release clearly states in table 1.

I'm going to speak to our social media team immediately about the chart and apologise for any confusion this has caused.

Apologies,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@independent.co.uk>
Sent: 10 November 2021 15:57
To: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Press enquiry - The Independent

This is what I was talking about on the phone.

here: <https://twitter.com/ONS/status/1455105074619985920/photo/1>

[Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)
on Twitter](#)

"The age-adjusted risk of deaths involving #COVID19 was 32 times greater in unvaccinated people than in fully vaccinated individuals between 2 Jan and 24 Sept 2021
<https://t.co/P6ZSC2Orxl>"

twitter.com

I quoted this in a piece as 849.7 as out of 1,000 because that's what the chart said but it could be that those numbers are just there as some indication of how big the bar is and not the upper limit?

I had thought that ONS had calculated a likelihood out of 1,000 in order to compare unvaccinated and second dose cases- not as literally 800 or so out of every 1,000 die?

But I'm not sure if that is correct and I'm trying to get some clarity on whether this is correct.

Appreciate this is an age-standardised mortality rate, and so don't know if that would mean that rates are reported differently.

The original data is here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsinvolvingcovid19byvaccinationstatusengland/deathsoccurringbetween2januaryand24september2021>



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From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
To: [REDACTED]@btinternet.com>
Subject: RE: Request for break down of jabbed covid deaths...
Date: 04.11.2021 11:22:54 (+01:00)

Hi [REDACTED],

You could try the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency but I'm not certain they'll be able to help. We base our deaths analysis on death certificates/registrations but they would not record which vaccines someone has had.

On your other question, it is something we'll be doing in future as part of further analysis of breakthrough deaths but it's not something we've done for this.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@btinternet.com>
Sent: 03 November 2021 16:52
To: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Request for break down of jabbed covid deaths...

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for getting back to me. Where would I get that data from?

Any help gratefully appreciated.

[REDACTED]

On 3 Nov 2021, at 16:41, [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED],

I'm afraid we don't have data on which vaccine was used.

I'm just checking on your other question.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@btinternet.com>
Sent: 03 November 2021 16:32
To: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Request for break down of jabbed covid deaths...

Hi there,

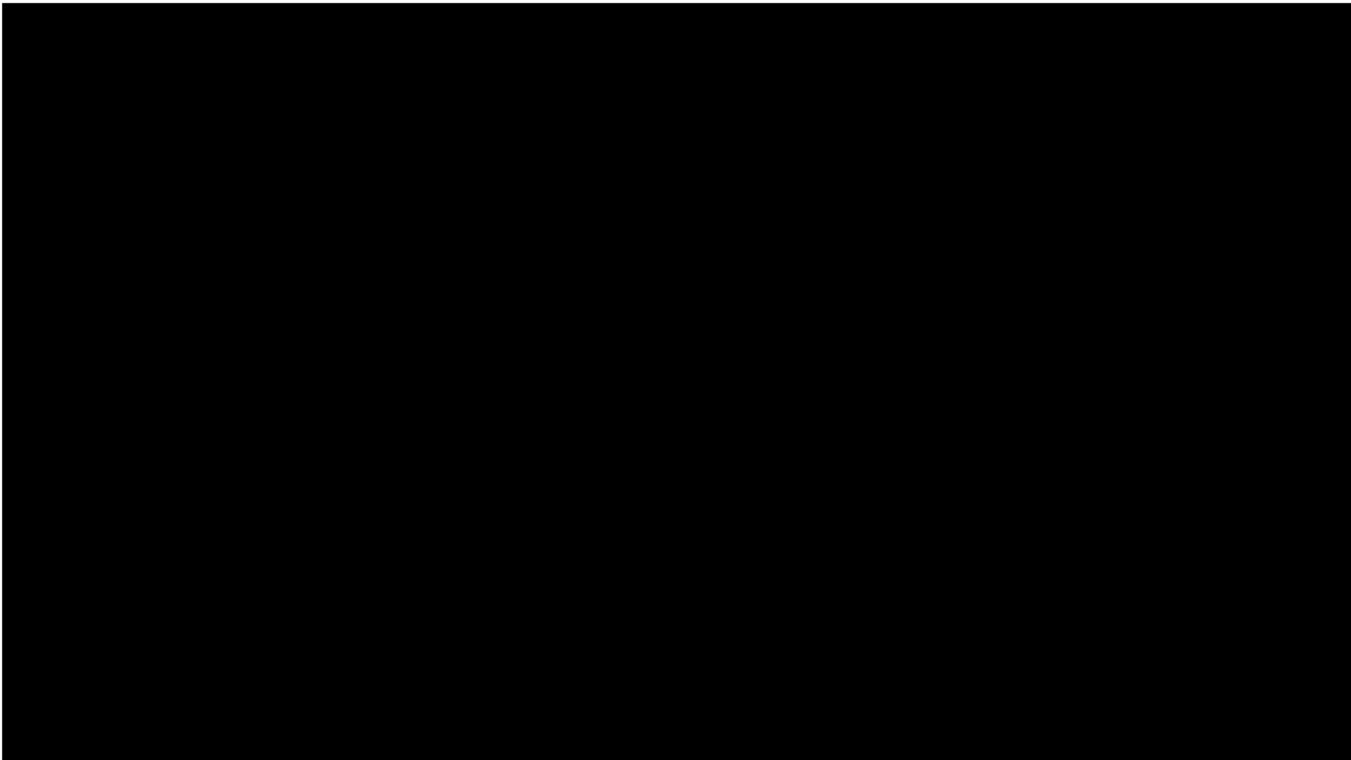
I have just been reading the data of COVID deaths up until September that includes the number of double jabbed people who have died.

Can you please send me the breakdown of what vaccines those that died had?

And how many of them had underlying health conditions?

Many thanks.





From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 November 2021 16:11
To: [REDACTED]@thomsonreuters.com>
Subject: [EXT] RE: Reuters request for info/comment

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments.

Hi [REDACTED],

Of course you can attribute our clarification on this to an ONS spokesperson, however, we're not going to comment on [REDACTED] claims.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@thomsonreuters.com>
Sent: 09 November 2021 14:55
To: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Reuters request for info/comment

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks very much for your responses.

Would it be possible to attribute these to an "ONS spokesperson"?

And would it be possible to get a response from the ONS specifically to [REDACTED] claim that the data presented in this way constitutes a Code of Practice for Statistics breach?

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 2:47 PM

To: [REDACTED]@thomsonreuters.com>
Subject: [EXT] RE: Reuters request for info/comment

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments.

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for the email. Please note, we are clear in the report that these numbers cannot be used to determine vaccine effectiveness. Please see our response for you, which I hope provides clarification on the points raised.

The age-adjusted risk of deaths involving COVID-19 was 32 times greater in unvaccinated people than in fully vaccinated individuals between 2 Jan and 24 September" gives the factor by which the risk of COVID-19 mortality was increased for people who were unvaccinated compared to people who had received the second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine at least 21 days ago over the whole of 2021 so far.

The age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs) for COVID-19 and the ratio of the second dose to unvaccinated ASMRs do change over time – this can be clearly seen in Figure 1 of our [publication](#) which gives the ASMRs by week. We provide the overall comparison of the 2 Jan to 24 September to provide a summary figure for 2021 so far and we will continue to update this as more data becomes available. However, the ratio can be computed using the weekly data (in the associated tables) to see how this changes within this time period.

This period includes a high percentage of unvaccinated people earlier in the year and a high percentage of vaccinated people later in the year and takes into account the amount of time each person spends in each vaccination state.

There are factors which change over the year and between the vaccination status groups meaning that no choice of time period is going to give a value of vaccine effectiveness and we describe clearly in our [bulletin](#) that this figure is not equivalent to vaccine effectiveness. These factors include the changing underlying COVID-19 infection rate (which was high in January, when many people are unvaccinated, but is also high later in the year in mid-July, when many people have received vaccinations), changing levels of "natural immunity", changing dominant variants and changes in the characteristics of the people in the vaccination status groups due to the selective roll out and differences in uptake.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@thomsonreuters.com>
Sent: 09 November 2021 12:36
To: Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Reuters request for info/comment

Good afternoon,

I am a journalist with Reuters fact-checking team. We fact-check instances of false or misleading claims that are shared on social media. More information about our work can be seen here: <https://www.reuters.com/fact-check/about>

We are fact checking claims made by a [REDACTED] that the ONS has made a "serious breach of 'The Code of Practice for Statistics'" in its statistics used in a [chart](#) showing "Age-standardised mortality rate for deaths involving COVID-19 by vaccination status". Please see example here: <https://twitter.com/JamesfWells/status/1457280924471681024>

He claims the ONS purposely used a particular time series to get a "specific result concerning the risk for vaxxed vs. unvaxxed from covid". He disputes the chart and alleges the rate is in fact higher for vaccinated individuals and lower for unvaccinated individuals. His detailed workings are available here: <https://thinkingslow1.files.wordpress.com/2021/11/misleading-ons-statistics-asmr.pdf>

Would the ONS be able to provide a response on this? What does it make of [REDACTED]'s claims? And is it true that the graph in question is inaccurate, misleading, or chosen to display a higher mortality rate in unvaccinated individuals?

We are aiming to publish a fact check on this today. If you can respond ASAP it would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks so much.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]@thomsonreuters.com>
To: **Media Relations** <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>
Subject: Reuters fact check: Deaths in the 15-19 age range
Date: 22.10.2021 10:43:51 (+02:00)

Hello,

I am writing from the Reuters fact check team about claims that “Deaths among Teenagers have increased by 47% in the UK since they started getting the Covid-19 Vaccine according to official ONS data” as seen in this article:

<https://theexpose.uk/2021/09/30/deaths-among-teenagers-have-increased-by-47-percent-since-covid-vaccination-began/>

A preliminary analysis of the data by Reuters appears to show that the analysis rests on the fact that 2020 had particularly low rates of death in younger people.

Can you confirm that this is correct?

And if so, can you shed some light on why this might be the case?

Our preliminary analysis also shows that on average, 282.9615 people aged 15-44 died per week in 2019. The comparable numbers for the same age range appears to be 49.128 for 2020, and 54 for 2021. This appears to be a major drop in deaths. Are we reading this correctly? Is this correct and, if so, what might the causes be for such a drastic drop?

Our preliminary analysis also appears to show that from The start of the 2020's data to June 26, there was an average of 13.56 deaths of people in the 15-19 age range per week. From then, until June 26 there was an average of 11.96 deaths per week.

In 2021, there was an average of 15 deaths per week for that age range until June 18 (about when the vaccine began being administered to them), and this rose to 16 deaths per week afterward).

Can you confirm that this analysis is correct? This appears to show that death rates in that age group rose in 2021 generally. Can you explain why 2021 may have seen more fatalities in that age range than 2020 did?

Thank you



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