

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and behaviour of the vaccinated population after being in contact with a positive case in England: 21 to 26 February 2022

Behaviour of fully vaccinated individuals not required to self-isolate after being in contact with a positive case of COVID-19, from the COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Survey. Includes analysis of daily rapid lateral flow testing. Experimental Statistics.

Contact:
Danielle Cornish and Hannah
Mason
publicservicesanalysis@ons.gov.
uk
+44 1633 456022

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1 . Main points

- Data collected between between 21 and 26 February 2022 found the majority (76%) of respondents reported that they had undertaken daily rapid lateral flow testing; this was similar to early February 2022 (80%).
- Two-thirds (67%) of respondents undertook daily testing and completed all the required tests, but this was a significantly lower proportion than early February 2022 (75%).
- Of those who undertook daily testing, a significantly lower proportion of respondents experienced difficulties obtaining tests in late February 2022 (12%), compared with early February (19%) and early January 2022 (46%).
- Almost two-fifths (37%) of respondents who took part in daily testing never reported their results, while just under half (45%) said they often or always reported their results.
- Around one-quarter of respondents (23%) correctly identified that someone does not need to have received the booster dose to be considered fully vaccinated.

All respondents were surveyed at a time where they were nearing the end of a period where they were advised to do daily testing. The advice for fully vaccinated contacts to start daily testing was removed on [24 February 2022](#).

2 . Daily lateral flow testing

Since [16 August 2021](#), close contacts of a positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19) were not required to self-isolate if they had been [fully vaccinated](#), but were advised to have a PCR test. From [14 December 2021](#), this advice changed and fully vaccinated contacts were advised to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days. Please note this guidance was withdrawn on 24 February 2022 and legal restrictions ended for contacts of a positive case in England, as part of the [Living with COVID-19 guidance](#). Please note the statistics in this release cover a period where fully vaccinated contacts were advised to do daily testing.

Between 21 and 26 February 2022, the majority (76%) of respondents reported that they had undertaken daily lateral flow tests (LFTs). This was similar to those who were surveyed between 31 January and 5 February 2022 (80%). Of all respondents, 67% took part in daily rapid testing and completed all the tests. Around 19% of respondents who undertook daily testing reported they had tested positive on one of their daily LFTs.

Around one-quarter (24%) of respondents reported not taking daily LFTs. Common reasons for this included "I do not think it's useful" (33%) and "I did not have access to enough lateral flow tests" (15%).

Of those who had taken daily LFTs, the proportion that reported experiencing difficulty in obtaining the tests continued to decrease. Around one in ten (12%) experienced difficulty in late February 2022; this was [statistically significantly](#) lower than early January (46%) and early February 2022 (19%). Of those who had experienced difficulties, common reasons were "I could not obtain a lateral flow test (no availability)" (60%) and "there was a delay in delivery of lateral flow tests" (38%).

Table 1: Difficulty obtaining lateral flow tests significantly decreased
Indicators of daily rapid testing, England, January to February 2022

Indicators of daily rapid testing	10 to 15 January 2022	31 January to 5 February 2022	21 to 26 February 2022
Percentage who reported they had undertaken daily rapid lateral flow testing	70% ¹	80%	76%
Percentage who undertook daily testing and completed all required tests	64%	75% ¹	67%
Percentage who were very or moderately confident that they understood the guidance on daily rapid testing	86%	90%	88%
Of respondents who had undertaken daily rapid testing, percentage who experienced difficulty in obtaining tests	46% ¹	19% ¹	12%

Source: Office for National Statistics - COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Study

Notes

1. Indicates a statistically significant difference compared with 21 to 26 February 2022

Just under half (45%) of respondents who took part in daily lateral flow testing said they "often or always" reported their results.

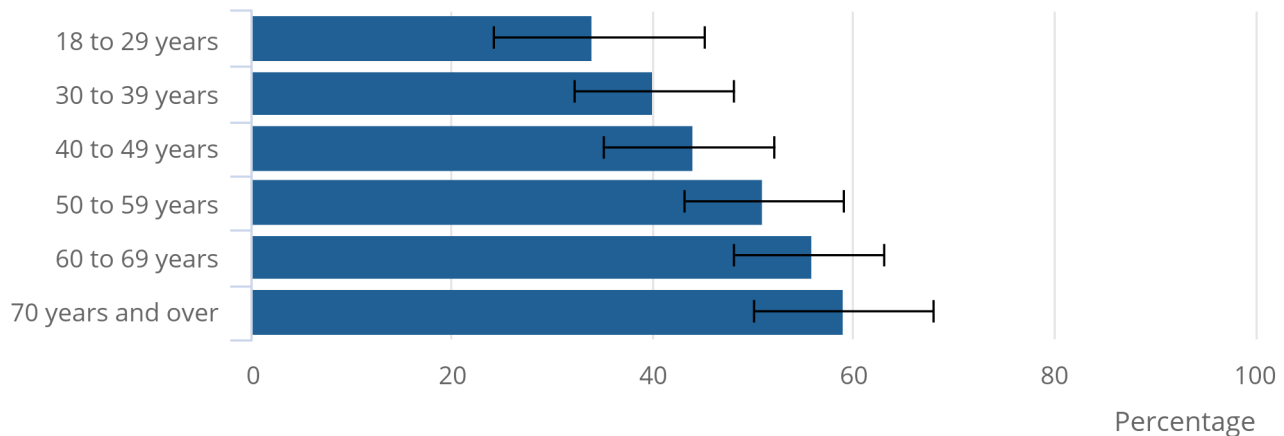
Of those respondents who did not always report their results, common reasons were "my results were negative" (47%) and "it's too much effort or I don't have time" (30%).

Figure 1: Around three-fifths (59%) of those aged 70 years and over often or always reported their test result

Of respondents who had undertaken daily rapid testing, percentage who often or always reported their results, England, 21 to 26 February 2022

Figure 1: Around three-fifths (59%) of those aged 70 years and over often or always reported their test result

Of respondents who had undertaken daily rapid testing, percentage who often or always reported their results, England, 21 to 26 February 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics - COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Study

Notes:

1. The error bars show 95% confidence intervals highlighting the degree of uncertainty around an estimate. Non-overlapping confidence intervals suggest a statistically significant difference between groups see [Glossary](#).
2. The estimate for 18 to 29 year olds has a sample count of less than 30 and should be treated with caution.

3 . Understanding and attitudes towards coronavirus (COVID-19)

Around one-fifth of respondents (18%) felt the current isolation guidance for those who are double vaccinated was insufficient to keep the public safe. Around three-fifths (61%) reported taking additional measures to keep themselves and others safe, beyond government guidelines.

The majority (89%) of respondents reported that fully vaccinated contacts should take daily rapid lateral flow tests (LFTs) for seven days, which was correct at the time they were identified as a contact. This was statistically significantly lower in males (86%) than in females (92%).

Almost one-quarter (23%) correctly identified that someone does not need to have received the booster dose to be considered [fully vaccinated](#). This is significantly higher compared with early February 2022 (18%).

4 . Coronavirus (COVID-19) and behaviour of the vaccinated population data

[Coronavirus and behaviour of the vaccinated population after being in contact with a positive case in England](#)

Dataset | Released 14 March 2022

Behaviour of fully vaccinated individuals not required to self-isolate after being in contact with a positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19), from the COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Survey. Experimental Statistics.

5 . Glossary

Contacts not required to self-isolate

From 14 December 2021, those who were fully vaccinated and aged under 18 years were not legally required to self-isolate if they had been in contact with a positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19). However, those aged five years and over were strongly advised to take a lateral flow test (LFT) every day for seven days. It was advised that the LFT test should be taken before leaving home for the first time that day.

After taking an LFT test and receiving a positive result, people were required to immediately self-isolate and follow the Stay at home guidance. From 11 January 2022, a follow-up confirmatory PCR test was not required.

If the daily LFT test result was negative, people were not required to self-isolate. However, further guidance was advised on [how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#). More information can be found in [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person](#). Please note this guidance has been withdrawn.

From 24 February 2022, legal restrictions ended for contacts of a positive case, as part of the [Living with COVID-19 guidance](#). From this date, fully vaccinated contacts were no longer asked to undertake daily testing. Please note the statistics in this release cover a period where fully vaccinated contacts were advised to do daily testing.

Fully vaccinated

Fully vaccinated refers to having been vaccinated with a Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days having passed since receiving the recommended doses of that vaccine.

Self-isolation

Self-isolation is when individuals do not leave their home because they have COVID-19 or might have COVID-19 (based on symptoms or being identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive).

Statistical significance

The term "significant" refers to statistically significant changes or differences. Significance has been determined using 95% confidence intervals, where instances of non-overlapping confidence intervals between estimates indicate the difference is unlikely to have arisen from random fluctuation. More information is available on our [uncertainty web page](#).

6 . Measuring the data

Survey information

This is the fifth bulletin in this series, with the survey in its current format and using the current data collection methodology.

The COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Study aims to understand the behaviour, attitudes and well-being of individuals identified as a contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and does not need to self-isolate because they are fully vaccinated. This survey was specifically designed in consultation with Office for National Statistics (ONS) experts to obtain information on this group of people.

Following the [end of routine contact tracing on 24 February 2022](#), this bulletin will be the last in this series.

Estimates for this survey

The data were collected between 21 and 26 February 2022. The sample was stratified to be representative of the age, sex and regional distribution of the "contacts not required to self-isolate" population in England. The achieved sample consisted of 1,112 adults.

Percentages in this report are based on weighted counts that are representative of the population of adults (aged 18 years and over) who had received at least two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, and were notified as being in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 between 24 January and 20 February 2022.

The survey was conducted via telephone and all answers were self-reported. Of those potential respondents who were successfully contacted by an interviewer, the response rate was 64.8%. When including cases where contact was attempted but not made, the response rate was 16.5%. As with all surveys, these estimates have an associated margin of error.

Respondents were randomly sampled through the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) database, which is held by NHS Test and Trace. The sample was limited to those who were fully vaccinated, had provided a valid phone number and who had been entered into the CTAS database at the point of sampling. A random stratified sample was selected from a sample frame, which included all contacts whose date of exposure was between 10 and 15 February 2022.

Experimental statistics

The statistics presented are [Experimental Statistics](#), so care needs to be taken when interpreting them. As with all survey data based on a sample, there is an element of uncertainty because they are susceptible to respondent error and bias.

7 . Strengths and limitations

The main strengths of the COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Survey include:

- timely production of data and statistics that can respond quickly to changing needs, as the questions included are reviewed for each survey wave
- the sample was stratified to be representative of the age, sex and regional distribution of the population being sampled and percentages are based on weighted counts representative of the population
- quality assurance procedures are undertaken throughout the analysis stages to minimise the risk of error
- confidence intervals have been used to determine whether differences across time periods and groups are statistically significant

The main limitations of the COVID Test and Trace Contacts Behavioural Insights Survey include:

- the limited period in which fieldwork took place, which meant it was difficult to reach a large number of people; therefore, the overall sample size for the survey is limited
- the behaviour during the ten days following exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) was self-reported and may be subject to recall bias and social desirability bias, which influences how accurately respondents can recall past events and behaviours; most interviews took place around ten days following exposure to reduce bias
- the nature of the target population, in which a large proportion of contacts are members of the same household, means that it is possible that the sample could include multiple members of the same household

8 . Related links

[Coronavirus and self-isolation after being in contact with a positive case in England: 9 to 16 August 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 8 September 2021

Behaviour of individuals required to self-isolate after being in contact with a positive case of COVID-19, from the COVID Test and Trace Contacts Insights Survey. Includes information on the impact of self-isolation on well-being and finances. Experimental Statistics.

[Coronavirus and self-isolation after testing positive in England: 7 to 12 February 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 1 March 2022

Behaviour of individuals required to self-isolate after testing positive for COVID-19, from the COVID Test and Trace Cases Insights Survey. Includes information on the impact of self-isolation on well-being and finances. Experimental Statistics.

[COVID-19: people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#)

Webpage | Updated 7 March 2022

Guidance for people with coronavirus (COVID-19) and their contacts.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Webpage | Updated as and when data become available

Latest data and analysis on coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) harmonisation guidance](#)

Webpage | Updated frequently

Government Statistical Service harmonisation guidance on how to best collect data about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Users can also find a bank of questions from multiple Office for National Statistics (ONS) surveys related to COVID-19 to be used in other surveys to further support harmonisation and questionnaire development.