

COVID-19 Infection Survey

Take part in the biggest
nationwide survey
of COVID-19 infections.



Survey Contact:
0800 917 9323

To view this summary in different languages
visit www.ons.gov.uk/cis/languages
Or, you can scan the QR code here.



If you need a large print, a Braille letter,
or an alternative language phone us
for free on **0800 917 9323**.



UK Health
Security
Agency

Take part in the biggest nationwide survey of COVID-19 infections.

Your support will help guide how we manage COVID-19 over the long term.



www.ons.gov.uk/cis

What is the survey about?



The aim of the survey is to find out how many people are still getting COVID-19, either with or without symptoms.

The survey also aims to find out how many people may have already had COVID-19 or still have an immune response to a COVID-19 vaccination. This is done by measuring levels of antibodies in their blood.

This is particularly important as more people get vaccinated against COVID-19 with “boosters”, and even more vaccinations after this, and more people get COVID-19. We need to continue to monitor how vaccinations, and having had COVID-19 before, affect our risk of getting COVID-19 in the future and work out who might need vaccinating in the future.

i **Since April 2020**, the Office for National Statistics and the University of Oxford have been conducting the survey on behalf of the Governments of the UK.

Why should I take part?

To help us work out how to manage COVID-19 over the long term, **we need households like yours** to join the thousands already taking part in the COVID-19 Infection Survey.

We are not just testing people who have signs of having the virus, like a fever or cough, because we know that sometimes people can get the virus without showing any symptoms.

Taking part in this survey is your choice. All the information you give us is protected by law and is treated as confidential.

Everyone in the survey can receive a COVID-19 vaccination if they want to – but you don't have to have been vaccinated to be in the survey. To understand how COVID-19 affects us all, it is really important that everyone takes part, if they would like to.

What does the survey involve?

- We will ask you, and anyone else in your home aged 2 years and over who joins the survey, to give a swab sample from their throat and nose using a kit that we will send to you in the post. The kits fit through the letterbox.
- Those who are 12 years and over can do their throat and nose swabs themselves. Parents or carers should take the swab from children aged 2-11 years old. The swab is a soft sponge on a stick and doesn't hurt.
- We would also like anyone who is 16 years and over to take a blood sample from a finger prick, using a kit that we will also send to you in the post. You do not have to agree to this.

- You can watch a video that shows how to take your blood with a finger prick and a video on how to take a swab at www.ndm.ox.ac.uk/covid-19/covid-19-infection-survey/guides
- Each person who joins the survey would also need to answer some questions. These can be completed online or over the telephone. Parents or carers can answer the questions for children.
- Each time we ask you to take your samples and complete the questionnaire, we will tell you when your 'testing window' is. This is the number of days you have to complete the questionnaire, and take your swab and blood samples and send them back to us. Everyone in your home who joins the survey will have the same testing window.
- At first, we will ask you to take your swab sample and complete the questionnaire for 4 weeks in a row, including your first test in the survey. These testing windows will be 7 days long. If you agree, we would also like you to take a blood sample with your first swab sample.
- Then, we will ask you to take your swab and blood samples and complete the questionnaire once every month from your first testing window in the survey until the survey ends. These testing windows will be 14 days long.
- We will tell you when the test kits are about to be posted to you by email or letter - you can choose which you prefer.
- We will ask you to take your swab and blood samples, then complete the questionnaire, and then send your samples back to us **all on one day**. This should be a day within your testing window.

- You can do this on a different day to anyone else in your home who is in the survey, as long as it is in the testing window.
- If it is not possible for you to return your swab and blood samples on the same day that you take the samples, please return the samples as soon as possible afterwards.
- **If you will not be able to take your samples and complete the questionnaire within any testing window, or do not want to take part that time, you can let us know.** This means we will not send you any kits or ask you to complete the questionnaire for that testing window.
- If you would prefer not to take a blood sample at any testing window, you can choose to just take your swab sample and complete the questionnaire. If you let us know, this means we will not send you a blood test kit that time. You can also decide on the day if you want to take a blood sample or not.
- If you do not take part for one testing window, we will contact you as usual when your next testing window is coming up.
- You will need to package the swab and blood samples and post them back to us in your nearest **Royal Mail priority post box** wherever possible. A priority post box is a special type of post box that is collected from more often.

- **Postage is pre-paid, and you can find your nearest priority post box and the collection times on www.royalmail.com/services-near-you#/** If you cannot access the internet, please ask when you call to register, and they can search for your nearest priority post box.
- If you are unable to get to the priority post box yourself, someone else can take the samples to the priority post box for you.
- If you cannot get to a priority post box and are not able to find someone to help you, you can arrange a pre-paid courier to collect your samples.
- Couriers will be available Monday to Friday. Couriers will give a slot of up to 4 hours but this may be at any time on the day you book, depending on the courier. Someone will need to be at your home during this time to give the courier your samples.

You can book a courier to collect your samples if:

- there are no Royal Mail priority post boxes where you live
- you are classed as vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable
- you are too unwell to leave your home
- you find it difficult to get around
- you cannot get to a Royal Mail priority post box without using public transport.

You can leave the COVID-19 Infection Survey at any time without giving a reason. More information can be found in the Participant Information Sheet that came with this leaflet, or at www.ndm.ox.ac.uk/covid-19/covid-19-infection-survey/protocol-and-information-sheets

How do I take part?

To take part you should **register with us as soon as possible:**

1



Call the registration team for free on 0800 917 9323. You can ask any questions you have about taking part. If you would still like to join the survey, you will then be asked to formally agree to take part – this is called ‘informed consent’.

Parents or carers will need to register and consent on behalf of children under 16 years old. Everyone aged 16 or over will need to register and consent themselves. You will also be asked some questions about yourself and each person over the age of 2 in your home that wants to take part.

You can call between 9am – 9pm Monday to Thursday, 9am - 8pm Friday, and 9am – 5pm Saturdays and Sundays. If the phone line is busy, we will call you back as soon as possible.

Ideally, everyone in your home who would like to take part should be available when you call.

If someone who wants to take part cannot be available when you call us, they will have 7 days after this to call themselves. If they do not call us within 7 days, they will not be able to take part.

2



Once you have agreed to join the survey, we will send you a copy of your consent form securely, and a reminder about how to complete each testing window.

3



The next time you will hear from us, we will be letting you know your swab and blood kits are ready to be posted and the dates of your first testing window.

Each time we contact you, if you will not be able or do not want to take your samples and complete the questionnaire during the testing window, you will have 4 days to let us know. If you do this, we will not send you test kits that time and will contact you again as usual for your next testing window.

4



After you get the test kits in the post, you will need to take your swab and blood samples, complete the questionnaire online or on the phone, and then send the samples back to us.

These should all be done on the same day. You can choose a time within your testing window that works best for you.

What do I get for taking part?

Every person who takes part in the survey can choose if they would like to get a £20 voucher for each testing window they complete.

You will need to both fully complete the questionnaire and take a sample in your testing window to get the £20 voucher.

- £ Vouchers will be sent by email or post – you can choose which you prefer.
- i If you skip your samples and questionnaire in one testing window, you will not receive a voucher. You will still be eligible for a voucher as usual for any testing window after that where you take a sample and complete your questionnaire.

If the survey is stopped, or you leave the survey, you will not continue to receive vouchers.



What will happen with my data?

- Any information you give us is protected by law and is treated as confidential.
- All samples are collected on behalf of the Office for National Statistics and the University of Oxford.
- All testing of these samples is done by the University of Oxford and national government accredited laboratories.
- You will be told the results of all tests you do. This will be by email or letter – you can choose which you prefer.
- The companies involved in running the survey will only use your information for the purposes of this survey – please see the Participant Information Sheet for full details about what will happen with your data.
- The results are already being shared so that everyone knows what we are finding (www.ndm.ox.ac.uk/covid-19/covid-19-infection-survey/results). None of this information identifies you or your family.

Further information & useful websites:

You can watch a video that shows how to take your blood with a finger prick and a video on how to take a swab at www.ndm.ox.ac.uk/covid-19/covid-19-infection-survey/guides

To read this information online, please go to www.ons.gov.uk/cis

Some translations of this summary and other survey information are available at www.ons.gov.uk/cis/languages

To find out more see the detailed participant information sheet that came with this leaflet, or visit www.ndm.ox.ac.uk/covid-19/covid-19-infection-survey/protocol-and-information-sheets

Contact details:

If you need to get in touch with us about anything, please email COVID19.Infection.Survey@ons.gov.uk or call **0800 917 9323**.