

# New campaign urges public to get tested twice a week

- Public will be urged to take the 'next step safely' and start regular testing, as part of new campaign across TV, print, outdoor and digital media
- Assets will be made available to workplaces and community spaces to encourage a new testing habit

From today (Friday 9 April) everyone in England will be able to access free, regular, rapid COVID-19 testing.

Alongside the roll-out of the vaccine, regular testing is an essential part of the easing of restrictions, helping identify variants and stopping individual cases from becoming outbreaks. Anyone can now access free, rapid lateral flow tests for themselves and their families to use twice a week, in line with clinical guidance.

To encourage people to get into the habit of using lateral flow tests twice a week, a major public information campaign is launching which will run across TV, radio, press, digital, out-of-home advertising and social media, with the TV advert airing for the first time on ITV at around 7:15pm on Friday 9 April.

The campaign explains that rapid lateral flow tests show results in under 30 minutes, and by taking them we can take the 'next step safely', protecting our loved ones, customers, workmates and friends as we continue to cautiously ease restrictions. It also demonstrates how people can fit these free, rapid tests into their morning routine to help create the new testing habit that will help to get us back to normal life.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Around 1 in 3 people have coronavirus without any symptoms, so getting tested regularly is one of the simplest and easiest ways we can keep ourselves and our loved ones safe. I'd encourage everyone to take up the offer and test twice a week.

Alongside the successful roll-out of the vaccination programme, rapid testing will be one of our most effective weapons in tackling this virus and ensuring we can cautiously reopen our economy and parts of society that we have all missed.

The British people have made a tremendous effort throughout the pandemic and I am confident they will do the same now by taking up this offer of free, rapid tests.

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be

spreading the virus unwittingly. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately, and by making rapid tests available to everyone, more cases will be detected, breaking chains of transmission and saving lives.

From Sunday 11 April, the 'Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air' campaign will update to remind the public of the need to use the NHS COVID-19 app to check in to premises, including outdoor hospitality, hairdressers and gyms. This will run across digital, social, radio and out-of-home channels.

Improvements to the venue check-in journey mean all members of a party will either have to check in using the NHS COVID-19 app or leave manual contact details. Users who have been at a venue where multiple people tested positive will now be encouraged to book a test, as well as monitoring their symptoms to further prevent asymptomatic transmission.

TV doctor and practising NHS GP Dr Zoe Williams said:

Twice-weekly testing will be crucial in helping us manage the spread of the virus as society starts to reopen. The tests are quick and easy to do, and results come back in 30 minutes. Key workers such as myself and my colleagues have been carrying these out for the last few months, and it's amazing how quickly they have become second nature to us.

However, it's important to remember that there is not one silver bullet in the fight against COVID-19, and even with a negative test result, we must still follow social distancing guidelines – hands, face, space, fresh air, and go for our vaccines when called.

Recent analysis from NHS Test and Trace shows that for every 1,000 rapid lateral flow tests carried out, there is fewer than one false positive result. Rapid lateral flow tests detect cases with high levels of virus and are very effective in finding people who do not have symptoms but are very likely to transmit the disease.

Getting a rapid test is quick and convenient. Regular, rapid testing will be delivered through:

- a [home ordering service](#), which allows people to order lateral flow tests online to be delivered to their home
- workplace testing programmes, on-site or at home
- community testing, offered by all local authorities
- collection at a local polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test site during specific test collection time windows
- testing on-site at schools and colleges
- collection from participating pharmacies

If testing at home, individuals will need to register their results online or by calling 119. They should self-isolate if they get a positive result and order a confirmatory PCR test.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 – a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – should book a PCR test online or by calling 119.

From Monday 12 April, people who have been in contact with someone who has tested positive with COVID-19 can now get a PCR test during their 10-day self-isolation period, whether or not they have symptoms.

Getting a test when you're a contact helps to find if you're one of those people and, if so, to ensure your contacts are self-isolating. This is how we break the chains of transmission. Even if you test negative, you will still need to complete your 10-day self-isolation period because the virus can incubate for that time.

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## [Ocean Quest report and safety flyer published](#)

News story

Flooding and sinking of the trawler Ocean Quest 70 miles north-east of Fraserburgh, Scotland.



Our accident investigation report into the engine room flooding and subsequent sinking of the UK registered trawler, Ocean Quest on 18 August 2019, is now published.

The report contains details of what happened and the subsequent actions taken: [read more](#).

A [safety flyer to the fishing industry](#) summarising the accident and detailing the safety lessons learned, has also been produced.

## [COVID-19 vaccines have prevented 10,400 deaths in older adults](#)

Public Health England (PHE) analysis indicates that [the COVID-19 vaccination programme prevented 10,400 deaths](#) in those aged 60 and older in England up to the end of March, an additional 4,300 since the previous update.

From 8 December 2020 to the end of March 2021, over 15 million vaccine doses were given to adults aged 60 and over. The analysis compared the observed number of deaths with the number of deaths that would have been expected if the vaccine hadn't been given during this time period. To allow for the time taken to develop an immune response to vaccination, the analysis assumed it would take 31 days before the effect of vaccination on deaths is observed.

Using this method, PHE estimates that around 10,400 deaths were prevented to the end of March – 9,100 in those aged 80 and over, 1,200 in those aged 70 to 79 and 100 in those aged 60 to 69.

Expected deaths with coronavirus (COVID-19) were estimated using real-world data on how effective the vaccines are at preventing death and vaccine uptake.

This analysis takes into account the direct effects of vaccines, there is now increasing evidence that vaccines help to reduce transmission, therefore it is likely that an even higher number of deaths will have been prevented by the vaccination programme.

Matt Hancock, Health and Social Care Secretary, said:

It's fantastic to see the impact our pioneering vaccination programme is already having, with over 10,000 lives saved in a short space of time.

That's more than 10,000 families who haven't suffered the loss of a loved one.

The science is clear: vaccines save lives. All 3 of our approved vaccines have been deemed safe and effective by our world class independent medicines regulator.

The new figures published today show why it's so vital that people get their second dose too. When people get the call, they should get the jab.

Dr Mary Ramsay, PHE Head of Immunisation, said:

This latest analysis is further evidence that the COVID-19 vaccinations are continuing to prevent hundreds of deaths every day. I would encourage anyone who is offered a vaccine to take it as soon as possible.

While the vaccines have a striking impact on mortality, we don't confidently know yet how much these vaccines will reduce the risk of you passing COVID-19 onto others. Even if you have been vaccinated, it is really important that you continue to act like you have the virus, practise good hand hygiene and stay at home.

The true value of these vaccines may also be in terms of future deaths avoided, should there be resurgence of COVID-19 in the UK in the future. Older age presents the single greatest risk of death from COVID-19 – prioritisation of the COVID-19 vaccination programme has focused primarily on an aged-based strategy in order to prevent the greatest loss of life possible.

The PHE analysis estimated the impact of the vaccination programme by combining data on vaccine effectiveness against mortality and the vaccine coverage. Observed deaths were then adjusted by the impact to estimate the daily expected deaths in the absence of vaccination.

Vaccine effectiveness against mortality was based on the most recent PHE estimates of effectiveness of vaccination against symptomatic infection (58%) and of death given infection (54%) which combined gives 81% protection against death.

In order to allow for the time taken to develop an immune response to vaccination and for a mortality endpoint, we assumed it would take 31 days before the effect of vaccination on deaths is observed.

The calculation was done in the 60 to 69, 70 to 79, and over 80 year olds separately. The overall total is cumulated across all days until 31 March 2021 and across the 3 years age groups.

Up until and including the 31 March, over 13 million first doses of vaccine and over 2 million second doses of vaccine were given to those aged 60 and over.

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[Myanmar Embassy: Foreign, Commonwealth](#)

## [& Development Office statement](#)

Press release

A spokesperson statement from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office on Myanmar.



**Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:**

We condemn the way the Myanmar military in London barred their Ambassador from entering the Embassy yesterday evening.

We pay tribute to the courage of Kyaw Zwar Minn in standing up for the people of Myanmar. Given the bullying behaviour towards Mr Minn, we are seeking to ensure he can live safely in the United Kingdom, while he decides his long-term future.

We continue to call for an end to the coup in Myanmar and a swift restoration of democracy.

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## [Letter from the Health and Social Care Secretary on use of the Moderna vaccine](#)

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