

Statistical bulletin

# Coronavirus and vaccine attitudes and behaviours in England: over 80s population, 15 February to 20 February 2021

Attitudes, behaviours and well-being of people aged over 80 years in England in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination.

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# 1 . Main points

- An estimated two out of five (41%) over 80s who had received the first dose of a vaccine less than three weeks ago reported they had met someone other than a household member, care worker or member of their support bubble, indoors; this appears to contradict lockdown regulations.
- A quarter (25%) of over 80s who had only received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination reported that they would be much or somewhat more likely to attend a hospital for medical reasons since being vaccinated; this increased to one-third (33%) for those who had received both doses.
- Almost half (49%) of over 80s perceived the coronavirus to be a major or significant risk to them personally without vaccination; this decreased to 5% if they were to receive both doses of the vaccine.
- Of over 80s who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, 41% had experienced side effects.
- Of those who had experienced side effects and were still awaiting their second dose of a vaccine, 63% said the side effects would not affect their decision to get the second dose, and 35% were more likely to get the second dose.
- Around 19 out of 20 over 80s (96%) would be very or somewhat likely to encourage others to get a COVID-19 vaccination.

## Statistician's comment

“The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination is, no doubt, a huge relief to many people aged over 80, as we can see that almost half of all them, when asked, considered COVID-19 to be a major or significant personal risk before receiving the vaccination – this decreases to just 5% having the same concern after hypothetically receiving both doses of the vaccine.

“It will hopefully also improve a wider quality of life for this group. We can see that one third of over 80s who had received two or more doses of the vaccine reported they would be more likely to attend a hospital for a medical reason since being vaccinated.

“We hope to start to see these wider positive effects of the vaccine rollout as it continues across more age groups in the coming weeks.”

Tim Gibbs, Public Services Analysis Team, Office for National Statistics

Follow the Public Services Analysis team on Twitter: [@HughStick](https://twitter.com/HughStick)

## 2 . Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination coverage of the over 80s population

The NHS is currently offering a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine to people most at risk from the virus. As the risk of mortality from COVID-19 increases with age, prioritisation is primarily based on age.

At the time of the [Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study](#), it was assumed that most people aged 80 years and over should have been offered a COVID-19 vaccination. These data were collected from 15 to 20 February 2021. Approximately 1% of respondents to the survey were residing in a care or nursing home.

When fieldwork began on 15 February, [approximately 13,083,000 people in England had received their first dose of a vaccine](#). More information on how data were collected can be found in the [Glossary](#) and [Measuring the data](#) sections. For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine please see the [Glossary](#).

[Official NHS England estimates](#) show that by 21 February 2021, 2,675,253 over 80s had received their first dose of a vaccine and 342,716 over 80s had received their second dose.

The Over 80s Vaccines Insights study data show that 99.8% of people aged 80 years and over self-reported that they had been offered a COVID-19 vaccination, of which 99% had received at least one dose and 15% had received two or more doses.

This compares with [an estimated 34% of all adults in England](#) who indicated they had received at least one dose of a vaccine as of 17 to 21 February 2021. This includes healthcare workers, over 80s and the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV).

Of over 80s who had only received the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, 78% had received it more than three weeks ago, after which [research by Kings College London](#) suggests they would be 67% protected against the virus. Of over 80s who had received two or more doses of a vaccine, 89% had received their latest vaccination more than three weeks ago.

Of those over 80s who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination, 41% experienced at least one of the [common side effects](#) described by Public Health England (PHE). The most commonly experienced side effect was having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where they had their injection (26%).

Of over 80s who had only had the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccination, and had experienced side effects, 63% reported that the side effects would not affect their decision to get the second dose; 35% said the side effects made them more likely to get the second dose.

#### More about coronavirus

- Find the latest on [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK](#).
- [Explore the latest coronavirus data](#) from the ONS and other sources.
- All ONS analysis, summarised in our [coronavirus roundup](#).
- View [all coronavirus data](#).
- Find out how we are [working safely in our studies and surveys](#).

### 3 . Behaviours of over 80s after receiving at least one dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine

Of all over 80s who had received at least one dose of a vaccine, 43% had met someone other than a personal care support worker, member of their household or support bubble, indoors, since being vaccinated. This includes people visiting their home or visiting other people's homes.

Of over 80s who had only received the first dose of a vaccine within the last three weeks, 41% reported they had met with someone other than a household member, care worker or member of their support bubble, indoors, since vaccination, appearing to break lockdown regulations (Figure 1).

For more information on support bubbles, please see the [Glossary](#).

[National lockdown guidance](#) introduced in England from 5 January 2021 advised it was against the law to meet socially with family or friends unless they are part of your household or support bubble.

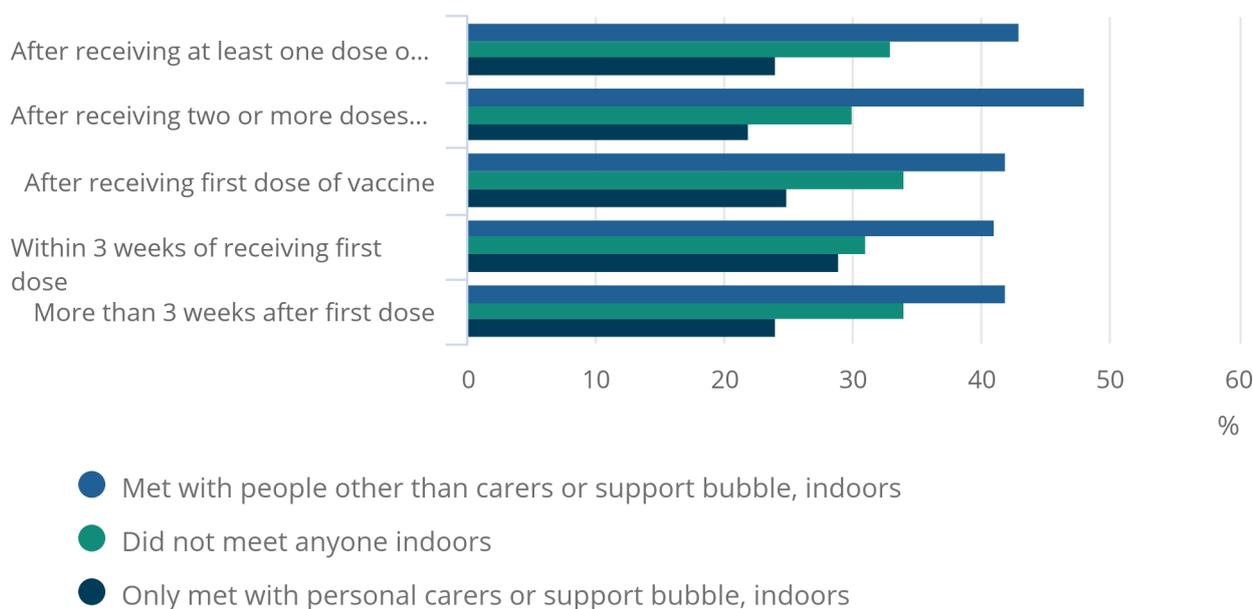
While some over 80s will have received their coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination before the national lockdown was re-introduced, a large proportion would have received their vaccination after this date, and therefore would have been breaking lockdown regulations by meeting these groups socially.

**Figure 1: Nearly half of over 80s who had received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine had met someone other than a household or support bubble member or personal carer, indoors, since being vaccinated**

Percentage of over 80s, by who they had met indoors, since being vaccinated against COVID-19, by how many doses of vaccine they have received, England, 15 February to 20 February 2021

Figure 1: Nearly half of over 80s who had received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine had met someone other than a household or support bubble member or personal carer, indoors, since being vaccinated

Percentage of over 80s, by who they had met indoors, since being vaccinated against COVID-19, by how many doses of vaccine they have received, England, 15 February to 20 February 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study

Notes:

- From 5 January 2021, the UK government announced a further [national lockdown for England](#), which advised it is against the law to meet socially with family or friends unless they are part of your household or support bubble. While some over 80s will have received their coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination before the national lockdown was re-introduced, a large proportion would have received their vaccination after this date.
- Because of rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%.

Of over 80s who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, a total of 67% reported that they had met somebody they do not live with, indoors, since being vaccinated (Figure 2).

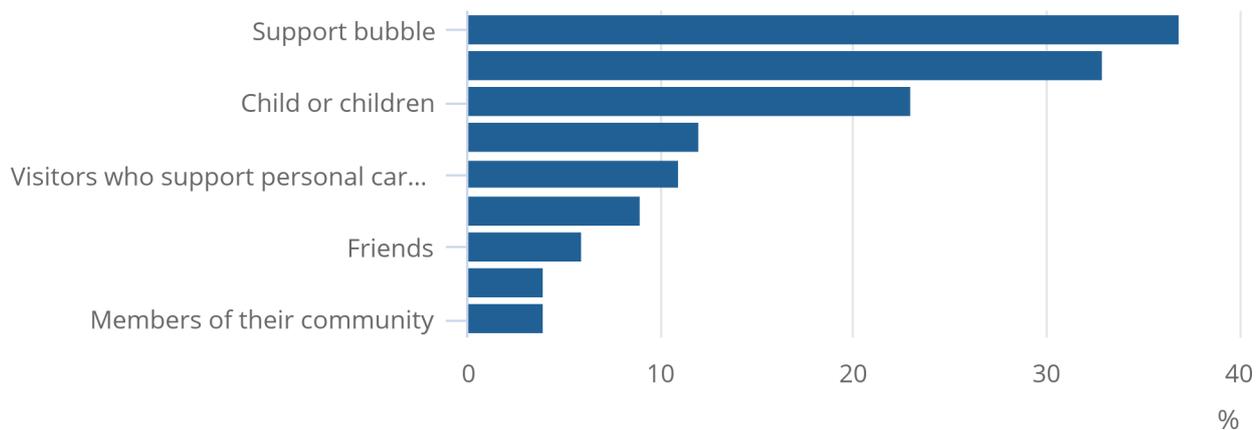
More than a third (37%) had met with a member of their support bubble, indoors, since being vaccinated, and 23% had met with their child or children indoors.

**Figure 2: More than two-thirds of over 80s who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine had met with someone they do not live with, indoors, since being vaccinated**

Percentage of over 80s, by who they had met indoors, since receiving at least one dose of vaccination against COVID-19, England, 15 February to 20 February 2021

Figure 2: More than two-thirds of over 80s who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine had met with someone they do not live with, indoors, since being vaccinated

Percentage of over 80s, by who they had met indoors, since receiving at least one dose of vaccination against COVID-19, England, 15 February to 20 February 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study

Notes:

1. Respondents were able to choose multiple people whom they had met indoors since being vaccinated, so percentages may not sum to 100%.
2. Because of rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%.

Of over 80s who had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, 49% reported that they had met someone who they do not live with, outdoors, since receiving their vaccination; 54% had left home to go shopping, and 45% had left home to participate in outdoor leisure activities.

In contrast, one in five (20%) people who had received at least one dose of a vaccine reported that they had not left home for any reason since receiving their vaccination.

## **4 . Attitudes of the over 80s after receiving at least one dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine**

One-third (33%) of over 80s who had received two or more doses of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination, and a quarter (25%) of those who had only received the first dose reported that they would be more likely to attend a hospital for a medical reason since being vaccinated.

Similarly, 31% of those who had received two or more doses of a vaccine, and 26% of those who had only received the first dose reported that they would be much or somewhat more likely to leave home for another medical reason (such as attending a doctor's appointment) since being vaccinated.

Of the total over 80s population, 96% would be very or somewhat likely to encourage others to get a COVID-19 vaccination, and 86% would be very or somewhat likely to get a COVID-19 test if they developed symptoms.

Almost half (49%) of all over 80s perceived the coronavirus to be a major or significant risk to them personally before receiving any doses of the vaccination. This decreased to 19% when thinking about risk after hypothetically receiving one dose, and further decreased to 5% after hypothetically receiving both doses (Figure 3).

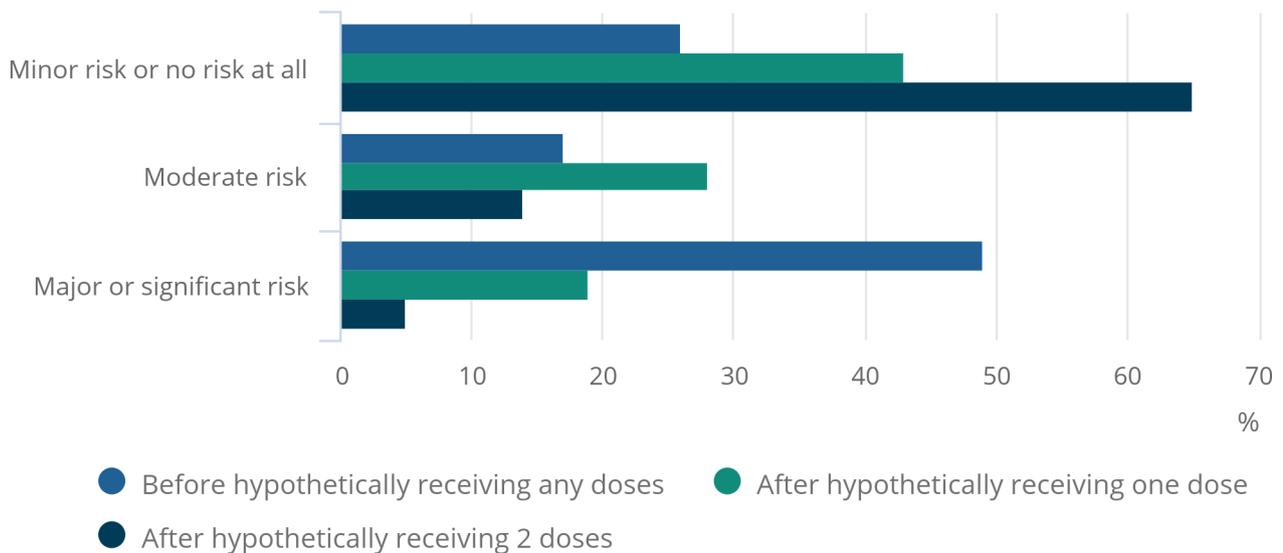
Similarly, the proportion of over 80s who perceived the coronavirus to be a minor or no risk at all to them personally increased with each dose of the vaccine hypothetically received (Figure 3). This suggests a general understanding that the amount of protection the vaccine offers increases with the number of doses received.

**Figure 3: The number of over 80s who perceived the coronavirus to be a minor or no risk to them increased with the number of doses of the vaccine hypothetically received**

Percentage of all over 80s, by how much they perceived the coronavirus (COVID-19) to be a risk to them personally, after hypothetically receiving each dose of vaccine, England, 15 February to 20 February 2021

Figure 3: The number of over 80s who perceived the coronavirus to be a minor or no risk to them increased with the number of doses of the vaccine hypothetically received

Percentage of all over 80s, by how much they perceived the coronavirus (COVID-19) to be a risk to them personally, after hypothetically receiving each dose of vaccine, England, 15 February to 20 February 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study

**Notes:**

1. These three questions were asked hypothetically, of all over 80s who took part in the survey, regardless of whether they had received any doses of the vaccine.
2. Percentages may not sum to 100% as respondents could also answer “don’t know” or “prefer not to say”.
3. Because of rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%.

## 5 . Coronavirus and vaccine attitudes and behaviours data

[Coronavirus and vaccine attitudes and behaviours in England: over 80s population](#)

Dataset | Released 4 March 2021

Attitudes, behaviours and well-being of people aged over 80 years in England in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination.

## 6 . Glossary

## Lockdown

From 5 January 2021, the UK government announced a [national lockdown for England](#), with schools shut, non-essential shops closed, and the population asked to work from home where possible, and to only leave their houses for exercise and essentials. Guidance advised it was against the law to meet socially with family or friends unless they are part of your household or support bubble.

## Support bubbles

A support bubble is a group of two households that join together and can then act as one household. People need to meet certain eligibility criteria to form a support bubble. Individuals that are eligible to form a support bubble include those who live alone (even if carers visit to provide support) and those who are the only adult in a household who does not need continuous care as a result of a disability. The full guidance can be viewed in [Making a support bubble with another household](#).

## COVID-19 vaccination

Vaccinations against the coronavirus (COVID-19) were initially introduced for the people most at risk of COVID-19, including those who are aged 80 years and over. The vaccine is given as an injection and requires two doses; the second dose is given between 3 and 12 weeks after the initial injection.

Approved vaccines in the UK are Pfizer/BioNTech, AstraZeneca (also known as the Oxford vaccine) and Moderna vaccine. For more information on vaccines see [NHS information about the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine](#).

It is possible to have taken part in clinical trials for the development of COVID-19 vaccines. In some trials, participants may have received more than two doses of the vaccine. We do not ask whether a respondent received their vaccine as part of a clinical trial.

# 7 . Measuring the data

## Survey information

The [Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study](#) was compiled rapidly in response to policy questions on whether being vaccinated against the coronavirus (COVID-19) was changing peoples' behaviour and adherence to guidance or attitudes to risk. It was produced, run and analysed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

This survey was specifically designed to obtain information on people aged 80 years and over, as they were likely to have been offered, or to have received a COVID-19 vaccination. As with all surveys, the estimates included in this bulletin have an associated margin of error.

The survey respondents were selected using implicit stratification from a list of individuals aged 80 years and over, from the Personal Demographic Service (PDS) provided by NHS Digital, and were contacted by telephone. We would like to thank and acknowledge the important role NHS Digital had in conducting this survey.

This is the first bulletin with the survey in its current format and using the current data collection methodology. We would welcome feedback on this publication to inform our future workplans.

## Estimates for Wave 1

The first wave of data was collected between 15 February and 20 February 2021. The sample size was 2,070 out of an estimated population of 2,837,000 over 80s in England (based on [Mid-2019 population estimates](#)) and survey weighting was used to weight the sample estimates to provide estimates for the population of over 80s. The estimates were weighted, adjusting for:

- sex
- age
- region

All answers are self-reported. Approximately 1% of respondents to the survey were residing in a care or nursing home.

## 8 . Strengths and limitations

The main strengths of the [Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study](#) include:

- it allows for timely production of data and statistics that can respond quickly to changing needs
- robust methods are adopted for the survey's sampling and weighting strategies to limit the impact of bias
- quality assurance procedures are undertaken throughout the analysis stages to minimise the risk of error

The main limitations of the Over 80s Vaccines Insights Study include:

- because of the limited period in which fieldwork took place, it is difficult to reach a large number of people and therefore the overall sample size for the survey is limited
- as with all surveys, these estimates have an associated margin of error; they are based on a sample of people aged 80 years and over, which is weighted to be representative of the whole over 80s population

## 9 . Related links

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

Webpage | Updated as and when data become available

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

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup](#)

Blog | Updated as and when data become available

Catch up on the latest data and analysis related to the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on our economy and society.

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights tool](#)

Interactive tool | Updated as and when data become available

An interactive tool to explore the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the ONS and other sources.

### [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Weekly

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) to understand the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.