

Why don't people with COVID-19 symptoms get tested?

January 19 2022



Sign to a COVID-19 test center in the U.K. Credit: Joshua Lawrence, Unsplash, CC0 (creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/)

Mild symptoms, poor knowledge of nearby testing sites, and certain demographic factors have been identified as barriers to COVID-19 testing, according to a new study of more than 4 million adults in the UK published this week in the open-access journal PLOS Global Public Health by Christina M. Astley of Boston Children's Hospital, US, and colleagues from King's College London. Testing is a crucial component of the COVID-19 public health response, even as countries roll out vaccination campaigns. In the UK, free PCR COVID-19 tests are offered to people with any of three symptoms: a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a change in their sense of smell or taste. However, more than a quarter of people in the UK reporting these symptoms don't get tested.

In the new study, Astley and colleagues analyzed data on 4.3 million people enrolled in the UK Zoe COVID Symptom Study, who use a [smartphone app](#) to self-report COVID symptoms and [test](#) results. They sent follow-up surveys at the end of 2020 to nearly 5,000 people who reported COVID-19 symptoms but no test. The researchers also studied more than 700,000 responses, received between April 2020 and February 2021, from UK participants of the University of Maryland Global COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey (UMD-CTIS), an ongoing survey partially carried out on Facebook.

The proportion of Zoe participants reporting COVID-19 testing among those reporting symptoms has increased over time, the study found, from less than 20% in April 2020 to more than 70% in January 2021. The odds of a symptomatic person not testing were higher for those with just one [symptom](#) compared to more symptoms (27.1% versus 14.6%, p

Citation: Why don't people with COVID-19 symptoms get tested? (2022, January 19) retrieved 7

May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-01-dont-people-covid-symptoms.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.