Latest numbers on COVID-19 in the UK – 28th May 2021

Two weeks ago: “We are at a crucial tipping point ahead of proposed unlocking on Monday May 17th.”

1. Cases

2. Hospitalisations

3. Vaccinations

4. Variants

With many thanks to Bob Hawkins for his help in collating the data
Latest numbers on COVID-19 in the UK – 28th May 2021

Today: We are past the tipping point. Cases are rising and B.1.617.2 has become dominant.

1. Cases

2. Hospitalisations

3. Vaccinations

4. Variants

With many thanks to Bob Hawkins for his help in collating the data
Four tests of the Roadmap

Before each step proceeds, four tests must be met:

Test 1: The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.

Test 2: Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.

Test 3: Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.

Test 4: Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.
Cases
Number of new UK confirmed COVID-19 cases by reported date (people who have had a positive test)

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk
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Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk
Infections are not evenly spread across the UK

ONS infection survey says week to 22nd May:
- Potential increase in England
- Low in Wales
- Potential increase in NI
- Increase in Scotland

Graph from https://www.travellingtabby.com/uk-coronavirus-tracker/local
ONS infection survey (prevalence) for English age groups to 22nd May

Estimated percentage of the population testing positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) on nose and throat swabs, daily, by age group since 11 April 2021, England

Source: Office for National Statistics – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey

Data from https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveypilot/latest
Hospitalisation
Total Hospital admissions: England

Data from [https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk](https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk)
Hospital admissions regions (and Scotland) to 26th May

Hospital admissions are climbing again in several parts of the UK
Daily hospital admissions per million people (log scale), coloured by direction and pace of change

Accelerating ▪️ Decelerating ▪️ In remission ▪️

Source: FT analysis of UK government Covid-19 dashboard
© FT

Chart from John Burn-Murdoch at the FT: https://twitter.com/jburnmurdoch/status/1397995443049701381?s=20
Vaccination data
UK First / Second Dose Coverage of the Adult Population by Day: Jan 10 to May 26
(Source: Covid Daily Update and Mid-2019 ONS Population Estimates)
Cumulative First Dose Uptake by Age for England to 23rd May

Younger age groups have increasingly lower uptake

Test 4: Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.
Proportion of cases detected without (purple) and with (green) S-gene

Without S-gene is almost all B.1.1.7 ("Kent"). With is (now) almost all B.1.617.2

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A new variant under investigation: 109 cases so far.

Part 3: New variant under investigation
VUI-21MAY-02 (C.36.3)

C.36.3 was designated a Variant Under Investigation on 24 May 2021 (VUI-21MAY-02) on the basis of the mutation profile and increased importation from a widening international area.

Genomic profile
The complete mutation profile of VUI-21MAY-02 (C.36.3) is shown in Table 16.

Table 16. C.36.3 Mutation profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gene</th>
<th>Mutations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>I82T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>R203K, G204R, G212V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Biological profile
VUI-21MAY-02 (C.36.3) contains several spike receptor binding domain (RBD) mutations linked to antigenic change including both L452R and R346S. Furthermore, it contains N-terminal domain (NTD) mutations potentially associated with antigenic change such as S12F and W152R. VUI-21MAY-02 also contains deletion 69-70 and Q677H, mutations also observed in other VOC/VUIs. Deletion 69-70 is associated with S gene target failure in the Taqpath assay which is used in surveillance analyses.

Summary

Cases continue to rise, although positivity remains flat across all nations. Cases concentrated in certain hotspots.

Vaccination going very well.

B.1.617.2 now dominant, both by sequencing data and by PCR S-gene dropout data.

We are now pretty sure that B.1.617.2 is more transmissible than B.1.1.7. We also know that you need 2 doses of vaccine for strong protection against this variant.

Compared to 2 months ago, we now have a new dominant variant that spreads more easily and has some vaccine escape.

We need to get and keep infections down, protect schools, and prevent new variants from spreading.