

Children of the 90s

COVID-19 Antibody test Questionnaire Report

25th October 2020



Summary

We had 4750 responses to a questionnaire sent out in October 2020: 90% of all those who were invited to take part. Here are some of the key findings.

How many of you think you have had COVID-19?:

- 58 of you (1.2%) reported that you had a positive test to COVID-19 before taking the antibody test.
- 68 of you (1.4%) told us that a doctor had told you that you probably had COVID-19
- 960 (20%) of you suspect that you have COVID-19.

What do the antibody tests tell us?:

- 206 of you reported that your antibody test was positive. We checked all of these where you had uploaded photos and agreed with 94%.
- Around a quarter of you who told us that your antibody test was positive did NOT think you had previously had COVID-19.

We are giving these results to the people who make decisions about how we respond to the pandemic and will continue to provide evidence as new findings are discovered. The results of the antibody tests are really important as very few population studies have been undertaken looking at this. Because we have so much other data from you we are able to estimate how many people in the general population may have been infected with COVID-19 but show no symptoms. It is only through studies like Children of the 90s that we are able to do this kind of work.

THANK YOU!

Introduction

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Children of the 90s launched two online questionnaires and invited all our participants who had given us an email address and who were happy to be contacted to complete these questionnaires. For the first questionnaire we wanted to quickly collect information about the early stages of 'lockdown' which was announced by the UK government on March 23rd 2020. The second questionnaire collected some repeat information so we could look at changes over time as some of the lockdown restrictions began to ease. We also asked some new questions so that we had more information about our participants during this time.

In October 2020 we sent out antibody home tests to over 5200 participants.

We received responses from 4750 participants between 3rd and 20th October 2020.

In this report we present some of our initial findings.

Who completed the questionnaire?

We sent the questionnaire out to 5,222 participants and it was completed by 4750, giving an overall response rate of 90%, which is absolutely fantastic!. We had responses from:

- 1941 original mothers
- 731 original fathers or mother's partners (we will refer to these as *fathers* for the rest of this report)
- 2080 original children (now average age of 28 years – we will refer to these as the *young people* for the rest of this report) or their partners. Of the young people, only 27% who responded were male.

As with our earlier questionnaires we have a unique opportunity to compare any differences in the two generations that the study has.

What you have told us about...

Possible COVID-19 symptoms

We asked you whether you had experienced various symptoms each month since March this year. These included known COVID-19 symptoms. The government now recognises three main symptoms as potentially being related to COVID-19: a high temperature, a new, persistent (continuous) cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>). A small number of you reported at least one of these symptoms at some point between March 2020 and when you completed the questionnaire: 6% loss of smell/taste; 4% new, persistent cough and 7% of you reported fever. However, very few reported all three symptoms together (<1% most months)

Having COVID-19

Fifty eight of you (17 parents and 41 young people) told us that you had received a positive test result for COVID-19 (before taking the antibody test), a further 68 (32 parents and 36 young people) told us that you had been told by a doctor that you have likely had COVID-19 and a further 960 (472 parents and 488 young people) told us that you suspected yourselves that you have had COVID-19.

Antibody test results

In total, 206 (4.3%) of you reported a positive result on your antibody test. This breaks down as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Fathers | 20 (2.7%) |
| Mothers | 63 (3.2%) |
| Young people - male | 96 (6.2%) |
| Young people - female | 27 (5.2%) |

We asked you to upload a photograph of your test so that we could check that we agreed with your report of what the result was. For the positive tests we agreed with 94%. We looked at a random sample of around 250 negative results and agreed with all of those.

Young people were much more likely to have a positive antibody result compared to their parents and it looks as though the younger generation were more likely to get a test taken to confirm infection compared to their parents. When we compare the results of the antibody test with your report of whether you thought you had previously COVID-19, around a quarter of you who had a positive test did not think you had COVID-19.

| Thought you had COVID-19? | Young people | Parents |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------|
| No | 34 (27.6%) | 22 (26.5%) |
| Yes, had a positive test | 24 (19.5%) | 11 (13.3%) |
| Yes, Doctor suspected | 12 (9.8%) | 9 (9.7%) |
| Yes, you suspected | 53 (43.1%) | 41 (49.4%) |

It will be really interesting to look to see what might explain the differences in why young people are more likely to have a test in the first place and to have a positive result on our test. With the data we have already collected we will be able to explore many factors such as occupation and contacts with other people.

What's Next?

We will be sharing the results from this study and our earlier questionnaires with a wide range of different people. Most importantly we are already reaching the people who make the decisions about relaxing lockdown. We will also feed into the NHS and government departments helping them to better understand the consequences of these unprecedented times.

We thank you for all of your contributions to Children of the 90s.