



End of free Covid-19 testing and mandatory self-isolation

On 21 February the Prime Minister announced the end of Covid restrictions and most support measures. Including:

From 24 February people who test positive for Covid-19 will no longer be a requirement to self-isolate, although it is still advised. Contacts of those infected will no longer be asked to take a daily LFT for seven days and the £500 self-isolation payment for people on limited incomes ceases.

From 1 April free LFT and PCR testing for the general population will end. Testing will still be available to clinically vulnerable people and older age groups, exact details of eligibility are yet to be published. NHS England has stated that testing of GPs and practice staff is "being reviewed" but has not shared any timelines for when the current testing arrangements may end or be superseded.

The NHS website has already extended the minimum interval between households ordering a box of LFTs from 24 hours to 72. Boots were the first major retailer to announce the cost of tests, selling a pack of five LFTs for £12 in high street shops, with Superdrug saying they will sell a five pack for £9.79 shortly after.

1 April will also see the end of recommendations that certain venues seek proof of vaccination, recovery or a recent clear test via the NHS App, although the NHS App will continue to provide proof of vaccination for international travel.

In the spring another booster jab will be offered to over-75s, older care home residents, and those over 12 who are immunosuppressed. No further details on eligibility, timing or who will deliver the jabs are currently available.