



SIREN POSTAL PATHWAY: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Thank you for continuing with the SIREN postal pathway. Please find below answers to the most frequently asked questions about the study we have received to the participant inbox.

Swabs

I have sent my swab, when will I receive my next one?

We are sending out swab kits in batches of two every month via a third-party provider. You should receive the next one by post within a month of the last, and you should have enough kits to complete one with each questionnaire. However, if this has not arrived in time for your next questionnaire, we suggest filling in your questionnaire once received and performing and sending the swab as soon as you receive it. You can also request an extra kit by emailing the participant inbox.

Why have I received two swab kits?

You will need to complete fortnightly swabs. You will receive two swab kits each month to provide you with enough swabs for the whole month, to reduce postage costs. Please use one swab kit with each survey, then wait for the next fortnight to use the second swab kit in line with your next questionnaire.

I have done my throat swab, do I need to do the nose swab in a different tube?

No – please put both swabs (one for the nose and one for the throat) in the same tube.

I have sent in my swab out of sync with my questionnaire, what do I do?

We can still use your swab, so that's not a problem. For your next swab please try to complete it at the same time as the questionnaire.

I have used my old swab kit from the winter, can I use this instead?

The kits have changed since winter, as we are using different laboratories to process the tests. Therefore, please ensure you only use the kits you received since May 2023.



I struggled to open the specimen tube – what should I do?

Thank you for those who gave feedback that the specimen tubes were too tight. We fed this back to the manufacturers and hopefully this issue has been resolved. If there are other issues that you notice, please do get in touch.

Questionnaires and barcodes

I have completed my survey, when will I get the next one?

You will be sent an email or text with a new link approximately two weeks after the first one. This will include the main questionnaire and a space on the last page to register your swab barcode and the date you performed your test.

Where is my questionnaire?

A link to your questionnaire will be sent to you by text or email (whichever you chose at the beginning) and is scheduled to be sent every 2 weeks.

I didn't register my barcode on my questionnaire. Is that OK?

Yes, we can still link your specimen to you. You cannot go back to the old questionnaire to register the barcode. For future swabs, please match the barcode with your questionnaire. There is no need to provide us with the barcode via email.

I have sent my first swab out of sync, and my next questionnaire has just arrived. What should I do now?

Thank you for letting us know that you sent the last swab. If you have a spare swab from this part of the study, you can now complete your swab with the current questionnaire link that you received, even if it is only a few days since the last swab. You should receive your next swab kits before your next questionnaire. For future swabs you can then match your next swab with your next questionnaire and continue with them paired from then on. If you do not have a spare swab, just complete the questionnaire for now.

My swabs arrived after I completed my questionnaire, so I didn't record my barcode in the questionnaire and now the link is closed. What do I do?

You don't need to take any further action for this swab - we can still link it to your questionnaire responses. However please do this for your next swab and questionnaire, and continue with them paired from then on.



I have waited to receive the swab as advised but have developed symptoms that are after the date ranges in the questionnaire. Should I add them to the questionnaire anyway?

The questionnaire asks for symptom information between two dates, so please report accordingly. If you have developed symptoms after the date range in the questionnaire, please make a record of your onset date to help you remember so that you can then report this in your next fortnightly questionnaire. This allows us to collect accurate information regarding symptoms and sick days.

Other questions

I am going to be on holiday when my swab is due. What should I do?

If you are able, please complete the questionnaire whilst away and then complete the swab on your return. Then going forward complete the next swab on the same day as your questionnaire, even if this is only a few days after the last. If you are unable to complete the questionnaire whilst you are away, please complete it on your return, but ensure that you are only reporting symptoms and exposures that occurred during the date period on the survey.

I have just recovered from COVID, should I wait before I start testing?

No. Please test every fortnight when your questionnaire arrives (via text or email) regardless of lateral flow tests or recent positives.

How do I withdraw from the study?

If you wish to stop testing after 18th July, please visit: <https://snapsurvey.phe.org.uk/siren/>

How can I find out my results?

We will be reporting your results to you directly. This will be done in batches. Results of the tests you have provided since March be sent to you over the next few weeks. Going forward results will be sent to you once the test has been performed. Please note that it takes time for your swab to reach the laboratory in the post, be tested and then the result sent out to you. This can take a number of days. If you have any symptoms, please continue to follow your local guidelines and do not wait for the result of your test.



UK Health
Security
Agency

SIREN

SARS-CoV2 Immunity & Reinfection Evaluation

I have subsequently retired from clinical practice, am I still eligible?

Yes, you are still eligible and we would be keen for you to stay in the study. Some questions are less relevant for you so please try to answer them as best possible.

If you have any queries that are not covered here, please email:
phe.siren.participants@ukhsa.gov.uk

***Thank you for reading this information and continuing to
play your part in SIREN***