

COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

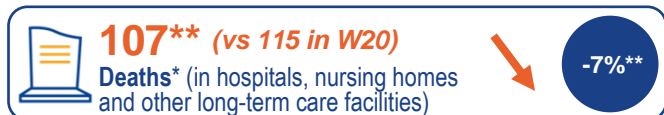
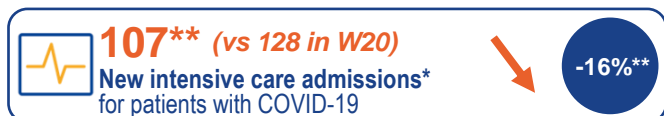
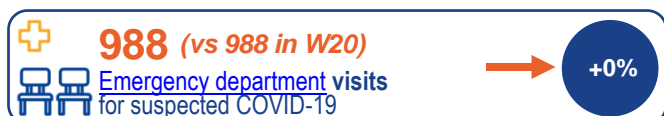
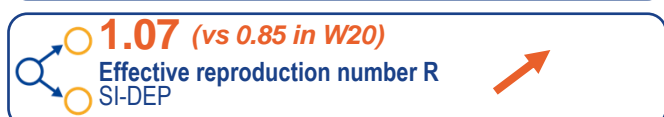
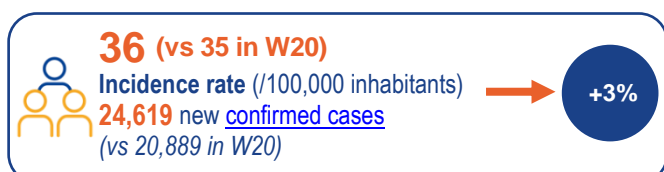
31 May 2023 / N°169

As part of its surveillance, alert, and prevention missions, Santé publique France analyses and publishes COVID-19 data obtained from its network of partners¹ as well as its own studies and surveys. This report is based on data submitted to Santé publique France up to 31 May 2023.

Key numbers

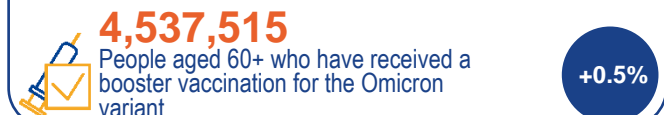
In week 21 (22-28 May 2023)

Compared to week 20* (15-21 May 2023)



On 29 May 2023

Compared to 22 May 2023



Key points

Epidemiological situation

In week 21, the virological indicators (based on SI-DEP data) stabilised within a context of very low screening rates. Emergency department visits also stabilised and new hospital admissions continued to drop.

- Metropolitan France:
 - Incidence and positivity rate increased slightly or remained stable in most age groups and regions
 - Hospital admission rates were down in the majority of regions.
- Overseas France:
 - Incidence rates fell in most regions
 - New hospital admissions remained low

Variants

- The XBB.1.5 recombinant remained predominant but appeared to fall with 45% of sequences in the Flash Survey for week 19*** (vs 47% for the Flash Survey of week 18).
- XBB.1.16 increased (6% for the week 19*** Flash Survey vs 3% for the week 18 Flash Survey)
- XBB.1.9 stabilised (28% for the week 19*** Flash Survey vs 29% for the week 18 Flash Survey)

Prevention

- Vaccination on 29 May 2023 (Vaccin Covid data):
 - 23.9% of people aged 60-79 and 27.0% of people aged 80+ had received a booster vaccination for the Omicron variant
- Within the current context of the pandemic and the spring vaccination campaign, observance of combined measures is still recommended:
 - updated COVID-19 vaccination, with a booster shot for eligible individuals who have received a primary vaccine series;
 - continued application of protective measures, especially in the event of a positive COVID-19 test and/or symptoms, in order to protect vulnerable individuals.

*A correction was made to the incidence and screening rates from the week including the public holiday on 18 May to take into account the effect of this holiday on screening activity. **W21: unconsolidated data. The value of indicators will be updated in the next Epidemiological update. ***Data from the week 19 Flash Survey are not consolidated and should be interpreted with caution.

¹ Santé publique France acknowledges the large public health network that contributes to COVID-19 surveillance: healthcare professionals working in private practice and hospitals, emergency departments, hospital and private biology laboratories, learned societies for infectious diseases, resuscitation, and emergency medicine, CNAM, INSERM, and INSEE.

Week 21 (22 to 28 May 2023)

SITUATION UPDATE

In week 21, the virological indicators based on SI-DEP data stabilised, within a context of still very low screening rates*. SOS Médecins consultations and emergency department visits for suspected COVID-19 also stabilised. Hospital admission rates continued to drop in the majority of regions. Given the insufficient level of booster vaccines and the continuing circulation of SARS-CoV-2, vaccination against COVID-19 in targeted individuals remains necessary. In order to protect the most vulnerable, a booster shot has been recommended since 27 April 2023 as part of the spring campaign for people aged 80+, residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities of all ages, as well as people who are immunocompromised and at very high risk for serious infection. Observance of protective measures and other recommended measures is still recommended, especially in the event of symptoms or a positive test, to protect vulnerable people,

At the national level, in week 21 the incidence rate and the positivity rate increased slightly, with a very low screening rate (234/100,000 inhabitants). The incidence rate increased slightly or stabilised across most age groups and was still lowest among people aged under 20. The positivity rate increased slightly in the majority of age groups and fell among the under 20s. The screening rate fell or stabilised at a very low level in most age groups. The number of consultations for suspected COVID-19 stabilised in emergency departments and in SOS Médecins organisations. In metropolitan France, the positivity rate was increasing or stable in most regions. Hospital admission rates were also down in the majority of regions. In overseas France, the incidence and positivity rates fell or were stable in most territories. New hospital admissions remained very low.

In metropolitan France, the XBB.1.5 recombinant the most detected variant but appeared to stabilise; it accounted for 45% of interpretable sequences in the week 19** Flash Survey (09/05/2023, based on 474 interpretable sequences) compared with 47% in the week 18 Flash Survey (02/05/2023, based on 795 interpretable sequences). Detection of XBB.1.16 increased, with 6% of interpretable sequences in the Flash Survey for week 19*** (vs 3% for the Flash Survey of week 18). Among all VUM classified variants, XBB.1.9 stabilised at around 30% (28% in the week 19** Flash Survey vs 29% in the week 18 Flash Survey). More information is available in the [variants risk assessment of 24/05/2023](#).

Vaccine coverage for booster shots for the Omicron variant remained insufficient. As of 29 May 2023, 23.9% of the population aged 60-79 and 27.0% of the population aged 80+ had received a booster shot. Indicators for the spring 2023 booster shot are available at [Géodes](#) from 30 May, 2023. A report on the spring vaccination campaign will be published when it has ended.

**Given possible changes in the screening rate, especially in connection with changes in testing strategy since February 2023, these indicators must be interpreted with caution. **Data from the week 19 Flash Survey are not consolidated and should be interpreted with caution.*

Graphs and tables

[InfoCovidFrance](#)

The dashboard gives direct access to the indicators presented as graphs and tables and a complementary weekly report covering:

- **hospital indicators;**
- **indicators in long-term care facilities;**
- **virological data at the national level;**
- **virological data at the regional level;**
- **data on variants;**
- **data on vaccine coverage.**

As announced last week, due to the positive development of the COVID-19 pandemic, publication of the COVID-19 Epidemiological Update will be suspended after this issue.

The epidemiological indicators will continue to be tracked by Santé publique France and they remain available at [InfoCovidFrance](#) and [Géodes](#).