

COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

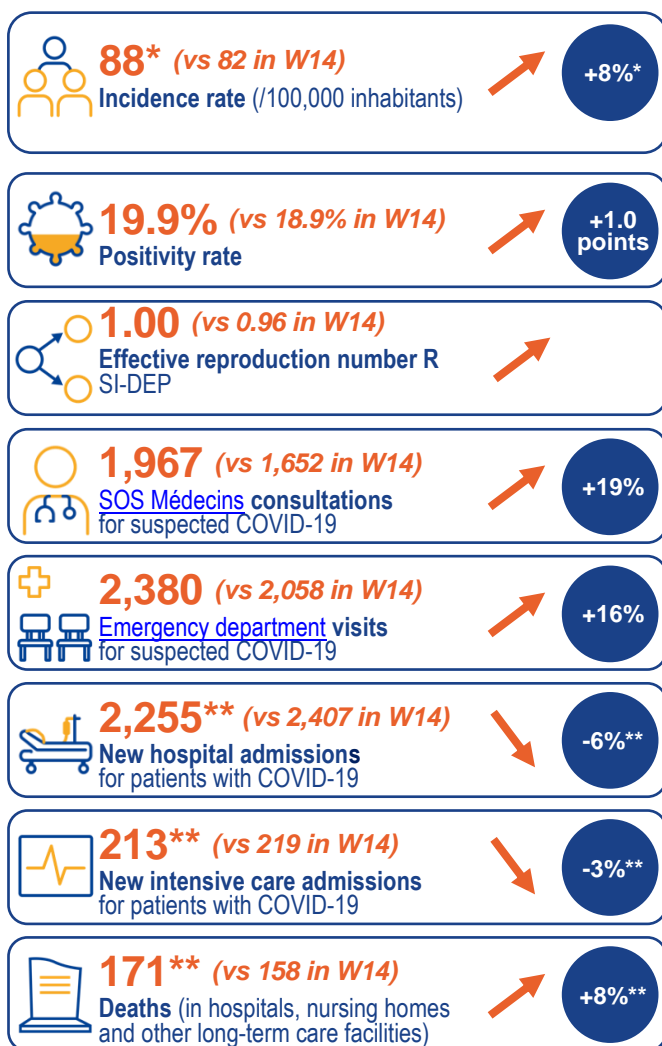
19 April 2023 / N° 163

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 19 April 2023.

Key numbers

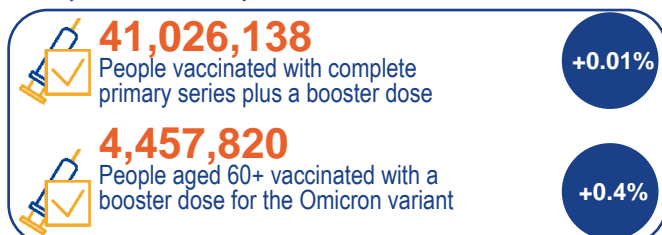
In week 15 (10-16 April 2023)

Compared to week 14 (3-9 April 2023)



On 17 April 2023

Compared to 10 April 2023



Key points

Epidemiological situation

In week 15, the positivity rate (based on SI-DEP virological data) continued to increase in a context of very low screening rates. Emergency department visits were on the rise, while new hospital admissions were decreasing.

• Metropolitan France:

- Incidence and positivity rates rising in most age groups and regions
- Hospital admission rate decreasing in majority of regions

• Overseas France:

- Incidence rate increasing in most regions
- Hospital admissions remain very low

Variants

- The recombinant XBB.1.5 appeared to stabilise with 57% of sequences in the week 13 Flash Survey
- The BQ.1 sub-lineage continued to decrease (5% in the week 13 Flash Survey vs 7% in week 12)

Prevention

- Vaccination on 17 April 2023 (Vaccin Covid data):
 - 23.6% of 60-79 year-olds and 26.3% of 80+ year-olds had received a booster dose adapted to the Omicron variant
 - 23.0% of 60-79 year-olds had received a dose of vaccine in the last 6 months and 4.0% of 80+ year-olds in the last 3 months
- Given that SARS-CoV-2 remains in active circulation, continued compliance with preventive measures is recommended:
 - up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination, including a booster dose of bivalent vaccine (protecting against the original strain and the Omicron variant) for eligible individuals already vaccinated with a primary series;
 - continued application of precautionary measures, particularly in case of a positive test and/or symptoms, to protect vulnerable individuals.

*Incidence and screening rates corrected for the week of 10 April to take into account the effect of the public holiday on screening activity.

**W15: unconsolidated data. Updated values for these indicators will feature in the next Epidemiological Update.

¹Santé 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.

SITUATION UPDATE

In week 15, the positivity rate continued to increase (based on SI-DEP virological data) in a context of very low screening rates*. The numbers of consultations in SOS Médecins networks and emergency departments were on the rise while hospital admissions continued to fall in the majority of regions. Given the insufficient level of booster vaccination and the persistent circulation of SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19 vaccination within target groups remains necessary. Compliance with protective precautions and other preventive measures remains recommended, particularly in case of symptoms or a positive test, in order to protect vulnerable people.

At national level, in week 15 the incidence rate corrected for the effect of the public holiday was increasing, while the corrected screening rate remained very low. The positivity rate continued to increase. The incidence rate remained lowest in the under-20 age group. An increase in incidence was observed in the 20+ age group, except among 40-49 year-olds, where it was stable. The positivity rate remained lowest among children aged 0-9 years. This indicator was decreasing for 10-19 year-olds but increasing in most other age groups. The screening rate was rising or stable in the majority of age groups. Consultations for suspected COVID-19 were increasing in emergency departments and across the SOS Médecins network of physicians. In metropolitan France, an increase in the positivity and screening rates was observed in most regions. New hospital admissions continued to decrease in the majority of regions. In overseas France, the incidence rate was increasing in several regions although levels were low. The number of new hospital admissions remained at a very low level.

The classification system for SARS-CoV-2 variants has been updated and these changes are detailed in the [risk assessment of 22 March 2023](#). In metropolitan France, the recombinant XBB.1.5, a VOI in the new classification, is now in majority and appears to stabilise with 57% of interpretable sequences in the week 13 Flash Survey (vs 58% in week 12). Among all variants under monitoring (VUM), the BQ.1 sub-lineage continued to decrease, falling from 7% in the week 12 Flash Survey to 5% in week 13. CH.1.1, a sub-lineage of BA.2, was detected but at low levels, with 4% of interpretable sequences in the week 13 Flash Survey (vs 2% in week 12). The recombinant XBB (excluding XBB.1.5 which is classified separately) is increasing slightly, representing 32% of interpretable sequences in the week 13 Flash Survey compared to 30% in week 12.

Vaccination coverage for booster doses adapted to the Omicron variant remained insufficient. On 17 April 2023, 23.6% of 60-79 year-olds and 26.3% of 80+ year-olds had received this booster dose. At that date, 23.0% of 60-79 year-olds had received a vaccine dose within the last 6 months** and 4.0% of 80+ year-olds within the last 3 months**. Vaccination coverage among health professionals for the booster adapted to the Omicron variant is estimated at 13.8% for those working in nursing homes, 14.7% for those working in private practice and 15.1% for those working in health institutions***.

**Modifications in the screening strategy since February 2023 could affect how people use testing, meaning these indicators should be interpreted with caution.*

***All COVID-19 vaccines combined. *** Method described in Epidemiological Update N° 147.*

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**
- **long-term care facility indicators**
- **virological data at national level**
- **virological data at regional level**
- **data on variants**
- **data on vaccination coverage**

For more information on COVID-19, the surveillance systems in place, and vaccination, consult the websites of [Santé publique France](#) and [Vaccination Info Service](#)
For more information on the regional data, see the [Regional Epidemiological Updates](#)
Find all the open access data on [Géodes](#)