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The risk factor that makes you 'twice as likely' to get Covid post-jab - and it's not age

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<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/health/medical/the-risk-factor-that-makes-you-twice-as-likely-to-get-covid-post-jab-and-it-s-not-age/ar-AAO7aZQ?ocid=msedgntp>

The UK has enjoyed a restriction-free summer, which stands in stark contrast to most of Europe, where varying degrees of restrictions remain in place. Evidence suggests Britain is paying a heavy price for its wholesale lifting of all measures aimed at curbing COVID-19. The rise in cases, as well as hospitalisations and deaths, is one of the highest in Europe.

Cases are rising every week and many of these infections are showing up in the fully vaccinated.

Research continues to shed light on the risk factors that put you at risk of catching Covid post-vaccination.

Age is a well-established risk factor but it is not the only contributor.

Research conducted by ZOE COVID Study app, which has tracked the movements of COVID-19 throughout the pandemic, has found individuals who had health conditions that limited their independence - such as frailty - were up to twice as likely to contract COVID-19 infection after double vaccination, and to get sick.

Frail adults have already been shown to be disproportionately affected by COVID-19. The King's College London research team behind the ZOE COVID Study app suggests strategies such as a timely booster programme, targeted infection control measures and more research into the immune response to vaccination in this group to help address the issue.

To gather their findings, the researchers analysed data from your contributions, including logged symptoms, tests and over two million vaccine doses on the UK ZOE COVID Study app between 8th December 2020 and 4 July 2021.

The research team assessed a range of factors, including age, frailty and areas of deprivation and compared that with post-vaccination infection.

Their analysis also found that for those who contracted COVID-19 after two doses were:

73 percent less likely to be hospitalised

31 percent less likely to experience acute Covid symptoms.

The research team found that the most common symptoms were similar to unvaccinated adults.

For example, anosmia (**loss of smell**), **cough, fever, headaches, and fatigue**. However, all these symptoms were milder and less frequently reported by people who were vaccinated, and they were **half as likely to get multiple symptoms in the first week of illness**.

Sneezing was the only symptom which was **more commonly** reported in vaccinated people with COVID-19.

"So whilst **there is still a risk of contracting COVID-19 after double vaccination**, there are clear reductions in the risk of being sent to the hospital, having really bad symptoms or going on to suffer from long duration symptoms," they wrote.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid had this to say about our research: "COVID-19 vaccines have **saved more than 105,000 lives** and **prevented over 24 million infections** in England alone.

"This research is encouraging, suggesting vaccines are not only preventing deaths but could also help prevent some of the longer lasting symptoms.

"We have invested £50million in research to better understand the lasting effects of Covid and over 80 long Covid assessment services have opened across England as part of a £100 million expansion of care for those suffering the effects.

"It is clear vaccines are building a wall of defence against the virus and are the best way to protect people from serious illness. I encourage everyone who is eligible to come forward for both their jabs as quickly as possible."

Lead researcher Dr Claire Steves from King's College London said: "In terms of the burden of long Covid, it's good news that our research has found that having a double vaccination significantly reduces the risk of both catching the virus and, if you do, developing long-standing symptoms.

"However, among our frail, older adults and those living in deprived areas, the risk is still significant and they should be urgently prioritised for second and booster vaccinations."

Professor Tim Spector, Lead investigator of ZOE Covid Study added: "Vaccinations are massively reducing the chances of people getting **Long Covid in two ways**. Firstly, by reducing the risk of any symptoms by eight to 10 fold and then by **halving the chances** of any infection **turning into Long Covid**, if it does happen.

"Whatever the duration of symptoms, we are seeing that infections after two vaccinations are also much milder, so vaccines are really changing the disease and for the better. We are encouraging people to get their second jab as soon as they can."