

# *Mass testing to begin as UK steps further out of lockdown*

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**One in three people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms, according to the UK government. (Photo: Hannah McKay/Reuters)**

London, April 7 (RHC)-- People in England will soon have access to a COVID-19 test twice a week, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said, as the country looks ahead to post-pandemic life. Johnson said that the program would break the chain of transmissions and help detect asymptomatic cases, which are believed to account for one in three of all infections.

The mass-testing plan, which will come into effect on Friday, will see lateral flow kits capable of providing results in about 30 minutes made available, free of charge, at COVID-19 testing sites, pharmacies and via the post.

Next week, England is set to ease further out of lockdown, a move underpinned by the swift rollout of vaccines. “As we continue to make good progress on our vaccine programme and with our roadmap to cautiously easing restrictions underway, regular rapid testing is even more important to make sure those efforts are not wasted,” Johnson said in a statement.

Anyone who tests positive using the tests will be expected to self-isolate along with all other members of their household. They will then be able to order a follow-up PCR swab test, which is more accurate and used to officially confirm cases.

If a negative result is returned, the individual will be allowed to end their quarantine. Health minister Matt Hancock said mass testing would help officials “quickly spot positive cases and squash any outbreaks.”

“The vaccine program has been a shot in the arm for the whole country, but reclaiming our lost freedoms and getting back to normal hinges on us all getting tested regularly,” he said.

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