

Rapid screening, face masks may prevent SARS-CoV-2 transmission at indoor mass-gathering events

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An observational study in Barcelona, Spain found that implementation of same-day rapid screening, use of face masks, and improved ventilation

was associated with very low rates of SARS-CoV-2 transmission at an indoor mass-gathering live concert without physical distancing. The brief research report is published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Indoor mass-gathering events have been banned since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic because of the high risk for the spread of SARS-CoV-2. Protocols are needed to prevent [virus transmission](#) during such events.

Researchers from Germans Trias i Pujol Hospital, Barcelona, Spain studied [electronic health records](#) to determine if previously tested containment measures could prevent high rates of transmission during an indoor live music concert with 5,000 attendees. On-site nurses screened all attendees with an antigen-detecting rapid diagnostic test (Ag-RDT) and filtering facepiece 2 masks were required to be worn during the entire event. Singing and dancing were allowed, and no physical distancing was required. An analysis of 4,584 attendees found 6 cases of COVID-19 within the 2 weeks after the concert. Of those 6 persons, 3 were identified in contact-tracing studies of known index cases who had not attended the concert; therefore, their contagion was unlikely to occur during the event. One woman may have had COVID-19 and attended the event during the incubation period. The transmission source of the 2 remaining cases could not be identified.

The authors note that the study was conducted in a community with low vaccination rates and a moderate infection rate. Nonetheless, they conclude that their findings have implications for informing [safety measures](#) at similar mass-gathering indoor events.

More information: *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2021).

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