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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release
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BA.2 variant cases rising ***Regional hospitalizations, deaths remain low***

Transmissions of COVID-19 are increasing, according to officials with the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD), yet the severity of illnesses continues to be significantly less than before vaccines were introduced.

Benzie and Leelanau Counties are ranked as medium/yellow in the transmission of COVID-19. The rankings are how the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [reports fluctuations](#) in COVID-19 transmissions.

“The local case counts follow the expected trend, as global and national trends show the continued spread of Omicron BA.2,” said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, medical director for the Health Department. “The trend includes an acceleration in cases in older school-age children and at long-term care facilities, both representing groups that congregate indoors.”

For residents living in and traveling to the district, the CDC recommends [staying up to date](#) on the COVID-19 vaccines, to wear a mask if symptoms present, if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or if you are at [high risk for severe illness](#).

“It’s important to continue to use the available tools to combat COVID-19,” said Dan Thorell, BLDHD Interim Health Officer. “These tools include staying current on COVID-19 vaccines and getting tested if you have symptoms.”

Modeling estimates from the [Commonwealth Fund](#) estimated that COVID-19 vaccines have prevented more than 2 million death, 17 million hospitalizations, 66 million infections, and almost \$900 billion (about \$2,800 per person in the U.S.) in healthcare costs.

To [schedule a vaccine](#), call 231-256-2197, or visit www.bldhd.org.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the [MDHHS vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#). Anyone with questions about COVID-19, testing, or vaccines can call the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID line at 231-882-2197.

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