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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release

July 29, 2021

Due to Delta variant, CDC updates recommendations regarding testing and masking

Due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases – largely due to the Delta variant – the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has changed its mask wearing and testing recommendations. The CDC now recommends:

- Anyone who is exposed as close contact, regardless of vaccination status, be tested 3-5 days after exposure.
- All students and adults in K-12 schools wear a mask indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
- All people in areas where transmission levels are substantial or high wear a mask when indoors, regardless of vaccination status.

To locate testing information, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder](#) website.

“Unfortunately, the Delta variant is spreading across the country, and health departments are seeing more COVID-19 cases being reported, which corresponds to increased positivity and case rates across our region and the state,” said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer with the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. “Although our two counties are currently at a “moderate” level of transmission, some other counties in northern Michigan are already in the ‘substantial transmission’ level. Because the Delta variant is increasing in prevalence across the country and is more transmissible the CDC has recommended dialing up preventative measures.” she added.

Peacock added that hospitals are reporting increasing admissions locally and are also urging people to be cautious. Although the most hospitalized patients with COVID-19 are unvaccinated, some vaccinated individuals are also affected, especially those most at risk such as the elderly and immune compromised. “Vaccination continues to be our most powerful tool in this fight – without higher vaccination rates, the virus is still circulating and becoming more transmissible. We urge anyone who has not yet been vaccinated to seek one of the many local opportunities as soon as possible to avoid further increase in transmission levels and associated disruption. Anyone with potential COVID symptoms or exposure should consider getting tested right away to minimize any potential spread,” Peacock said.

Average daily cases reported to the health department are increasing at a faster rate than in previous weeks. Some of the differences between June 2021 and July 2021 cases include:

- 30 total cases (confirmed and probable) between July 1-29, 2021, compared to 12 total cases in June 2021. That is a 150% increase compared to June 2021.
- The 50-69 age group made up 46.7% of the cases reported through today in July.
- As of July 28, those age 12-15 had the lowest vaccination status (42.4% with first dose) compared to the highest vaccination rates among those age 65 years and older (85.5% with first dose).

Officials with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) backed the CDC recommendations. “We support the CDC recommendations that everyone - including fully vaccinated individuals - wear a mask in public indoor settings during times of local substantial or high transmission, and in K-12 schools to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially with the presence of the Delta variant in Michigan. Although we have made great strides in vaccination rates, we are concerned about increasing case counts we are experiencing in our state. The safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is our best defense against the virus and the way we are going to end this pandemic. MDHHS urges all eligible Michiganders to get vaccinated as soon as possible,” state officials stated.

Everyone is welcome at all health department clinics, including residents and non-residents. All three vaccines are available. Minors must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian. Public health nurses are on site at these events and able to answer any questions about the vaccines. All clinics are open to walk-ins or an appointment can be scheduled by clicking on the clinic link below:

Tuesday, August 3rd

- Suttons Bay Middle School Gymnasium, 310 S. Elm Street, Suttons Bay, MI 49682
- Time: 10:00-12:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Wednesday, August 4th

- Crystal Cafe, 1681 Benzie Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 4:00- 6:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

As of 4:00 p.m. today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,270, Leelanau– 1,278
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 10, Leelanau– 17
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,226, Leelanau– 1,245
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 34, Leelanau– 16
- Hospitalized: 164 total; 1 currently

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