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MEDIA RELEASE

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COVID-19 is increasing in NE Michigan, Do Your Part

As we continue into the fall and holiday seasons, and our days and nights get colder, many of us will find ourselves spending more time indoors than outdoors. It is important that we continue to help keep ourselves, our families, and our communities safe and healthy. Let us do our part to help reduce the risk of getting or spreading both COVID-19 and flu this season.

“Across our area, we have seen COVID-19 numbers increase at schools and in our communities,” said Denise Bryan, Health Officer for District Health Department No. 2. “We’re asking everyone in NE Michigan to do their part to keep the spread of illness low. We know consistent use of face coverings, distancing, hand cleaning and full cooperation with health officials slows the spread of illness and prevents additional cases. With continued cooperation, we can continue doing things we love as safely as possible and keeping in mind that COVID-19 continues to circulate in our communities. The time is now for collective micro-actions by all of us as we now are also experiencing an increase in hospitalizations.”

Here is what you can do:

Get Your Flu Vaccine

Everyone six months and older needs a flu vaccine, especially this year. Widespread flu vaccination will reduce the spread of flu during the COVID pandemic and help prevent serious illness as much as possible. It also reduces the chances of people becoming infected with both flu and COVID-19 at the same time.

Wear Your Face Covering

Wearing a face covering is one of the most effective ways to minimize the spread of COVID-19, which may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. The virus spreads easily between people through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or yells.

Social Distance

Social distancing or staying at least 6 feet away from people you do not live with, is another effective strategy that will help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Being outdoors in an open space is safer, and the DHD2 recommends avoiding being in small rooms with poor airflow with non-household members. *This means no indoor parties, sleepovers, or other social get-togethers with non-household members where there is poor ventilation or closed windows.*

Practice Good Hygiene

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if you do not have soap and water. Avoid touching your face and mouth; and cover your coughs and sneezes.

Monitor Your Symptoms and Stay Home If You Feel Under the Weather

People with COVID-19 may have many different symptoms that range in severity. Common symptoms include fever, cough (not attributed to allergies or asthma), shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat, muscle aches, severe tiredness, chills, new loss of taste or smell, or diarrhea.

If you or your child are experiencing any of these symptoms, even mild ones, stay home. Manage symptoms with fever-reducing medicine, stay hydrated and eat when you can, and stay away from people and pets in your household. Call your doctor if symptoms keep getting worse or call 9-1-1 if you have difficulty breathing, chest pain, or if you are feeling light-headed or unstable.

Cooperate Fully with Case Investigation and Contact Tracing

Remember the virus that causes COVID-19 continues to circulate locally. Cases can and do occur. Cooperating with public health guidance is the best way for us to stop any additional spread once a case has been identified. This means responding promptly to school and health officials and answering questions honestly - to protect everyone's health.

Please remember that not everyone infected with COVID-19 shows or feels symptoms, which is why getting a flu shot, wearing a face mask, social distancing, practicing good hygiene habits, cooperating with case investigation and contact tracing are all critical to keeping yourself, your loved ones, and those around you safe and healthy.

DHD2 would like to remind people that, right now, family gatherings are one of the major ways COVID-19 is being spread. Approximately 40% of COVID-19 cases appear to be asymptomatic. Asymptomatic cases are especially difficult because they are not sick and therefore not staying home. Individuals can spread virus prior to experiencing symptoms.

For the latest COVID-19 information, visit our website at www.dhd2.org/COVID-19.