



**ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**COVID STILL SPREADING IN ITASCA COUNTY**

*Rates have stayed higher since mid-May*

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **June 10, 2022**) – New cases of COVID infection in Itasca County have plateaued at a higher level since mid-May and another local death has been attributed to the virus.

As of June 7, Itasca County had seen 182 new cases of COVID over the previous two weeks, a 14-day rate per 10,000 residents of 40.6. After several weeks of very few new cases, rates of new COVID infection have remained at this elevated level since mid-May, but still at far lower levels than in winter months. An additional Itasca resident died recently due to COVID, bringing the pandemic total in the county to 148.

COVID vaccines, testing/tests and treatments are widely available in the county at clinics, pharmacies and retail stores throughout Itasca County. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, if you have COVID-19 symptoms and test positive, do not wait to get treated. You must take oral COVID-19 medication within five days of your first COVID-19 symptoms.

“The best advice today? Pay attention to mild symptoms, be sure to test and—if you’re positive—seek treatment if you are eligible,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health division director. “We are in a different place today. Current variants show symptoms sooner and the quicker you recognize them the more options you have.”

Pfizer vaccine boosters are now approved for those ages 5 to 11 through local clinics. Also, the federal “test to treat” program, where you can get tested (or have your home test assessed) and then receive appropriate treatment on the spot, is now available in our region (the closest participants are Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital and St. Luke’s Hospital in Duluth).

Itasca residents with questions or concerns may leave them on the Itasca County COVID message line at 218-327-6784.

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