



ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID STILL IMPACTING HEALTH OF ITASCA RESIDENTS

When gathering, best to be outdoors

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **June 28, 2022**) – June saw consistently higher levels of COVID among Itasca County residents, including two COVID-related deaths. New laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID among Itasca County residents over the past two weeks (June 14-27) totaled 169, although this does not include any cases identified only through at-home (antigen) tests.

When measured as a 14-day rate per 10,000 residents, Itasca County now stands at 40.6, similar to rates seen here over the past six weeks and significantly higher than in April and early May. One additional resident has passed away due to COVID in the past two weeks, bringing total Itasca deaths to 149.

“Why this higher rate? I’d say increased gatherings and lack of mitigation strategies, plus Omicron is more contagious,” said Kelly Chandler Itasca County Public Health division director. “If gathering with others, be outdoors when you can. We never know how COVID will impact us and our loved ones; minimize the chance that you will be one of the unlucky ones.”

“The virus spreads through respiratory droplets released into the air when talking, coughing, speaking, breathing or sneezing,” according to Mayo Clinic. “When you’re outside, fresh air is constantly moving, dispersing these droplets. So you’re less likely to breathe in enough of the respiratory droplets containing the virus that causes COVID-19 to become infected if you haven’t had a COVID-19 vaccine.”

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.

Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are now approved for those ages 6 months to 5 years and available through Itasca area clinics. According to the Centers for Disease Control, all children, including children who have already had COVID-19, should get vaccinated.

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

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