



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 14, 2020

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(July 14, 2020) – Community spread is occurring in Southwest Minnesota.

“We are definitely seeing an increase in numbers in our rural areas. We are aware of several larger gatherings over the last couple of weeks and can link many cases back to those events. We understand that when young, healthy individuals contract the virus, they are not likely to become severely ill. Unfortunately, we don't live in seclusion and when a young person is asymptomatic or has very mild symptoms, they can still be contagious. This poses a greater threat for individuals who are older or who have underlying conditions.” Ann Orren – Southwest Health & Human Services, Community Public Health Supervisor.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus. Person-to-person spread means:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- Droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly inhaled into the lungs of these people.
- COVID-19 may also spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Due to the increase of community spread in SW Minnesota, whether you are indoors or outdoors, remember to:

- Keep 6 feet distance from other people from different households.
- Wear a cloth face covering when you are in public around others outside of your household.
- Try to minimize sharing items and equipment with people not from your household.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Stay home if you are sick and be sure to cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or tissue.

If someone that you have had close contact with has COVID-19, you must separate yourself from others. Stay home and do not go to work, school or any place outside of your home for 14 days after the last date of exposure. Even if you are tested and your test comes back negative, you must stay home for 14 days.

If you become sick, get tested. If you test positive, stay home and separate yourself from other people in your home by staying in a separate area of the home. You can leave your home and end isolation after these three things have happened:

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (Three full days of no fever without using fever-reducing medication).
- AND other symptoms have improved (i.e. your cough or shortness of breath have improved).
- AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

If your symptoms get worse, you have difficulty breathing, or you need medical care:

- Contact your health care provider by calling ahead.
- If you need emergency medical attention, call 9-1-1 and let them know that you have tested positive or have been exposed to a person with COVID-19.

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