

COVID 19 UPDATE

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(It's a Long One)

Last week brought the grim milestone of surpassing 300 cases of Covid 19 among members on the Menominee reservation.

Three Menominee tribal members lost their lives to Covid in the past week, the fatal virus passed to them by someone else.

Menominee are hospitalized in Green Bay, Appleton, Neenah, and Shawano, many in serious, life-threatening condition. Despite being desperately ill, no family is allowed to be with them, because of Covid. They fight alone.

We now see the shift of cases moving from young adults to older adults. With that comes the expected increase in severe illness, hospitalizations, and death.

We now have the first case of second infection. You can get re-infected. So far, immunity after Covid infection seems to last 90 days. More data is needed to understand this. Bottom line is don't stop safety measures if you have had Covid.

The new catch-phrase of controlling the pandemic: Protect the Vulnerable. I am not exactly sure what is meant by that;

should we lock the vulnerable up in a gym until the pandemic is done? Vulnerable people live with less-vulnerable people who bring the virus home to them. Vulnerable people often have no choice but to continuing working.

There are things to help protect your elders and chronically ill at home:

- **Wear a mask anytime you are in the same room with an elder or chronically-ill person. And stay six feet away from them.**
- **Wear a mask if you are the caregiver at home for another person, anytime you are within six feet to give cares.**
- **Make sure the elder or chronically ill person is sleeping alone, not sharing air space with others while sleeping.**
- **Don't share utensils, candy, or beverages with elders or the chronically ill.**
- **The most important thing YOU can do to protect the elderly and vulnerable is don't catch the virus. Wear a mask, stop partying, visiting, gathering, and ignoring distancing.**

A few reminders:

- **Isolation: means you have Covid and you STAY HOME so you don't infect anyone else, for 10 days.**

- **Quarantine:** means you have been exposed and you **MAY HAVE Covid** so you stay home for 14 days. Stay home oddly means just that: **STAY HOME**. You risk killing other people by not minding the public health directions. If your boss is trying to get you to come to work when you are in quarantine, call your physician or the Community Health dept at MTC. You should **NOT** work! (If you live with someone with Covid, your quarantine may be 24 days).
- **Don't ask for a test unless it's been at least 4 days since exposure to Covid; it takes that long for the test to become positive. You can be falsely assured by a negative test done too early. You could still have Covid.**

It is not too late to stop this surge of Covid in the community.

The most important part RIGHT NOW is for young people, ages 20-39 to start taking Covid seriously, stop riding together without masks, stop partying together, stop gathering. It is very clear from contact tracing people in this age group are bringing the virus home and infecting those who will struggle to survive the disease. It does not have to happen, not one more life has to be lost. Please stop, stop and pause, stop and think- about what YOU need to do to keep others safe.

The National Guard will be at Transit 10 am-6 pm on Tuesday 11/10. I am encouraging nearly everyone to get tested:

- **If you have had Covid, it takes at least 3 weeks to for the test to be negative. If you have completed Isolation, there is no reason to test. If it has been over 90 days since you had Covid and you have NEW symptoms, get tested.**
- **If you have been exposed, you should wait 4-5 days after exposure to get tested, testing early may cause a false negative result, meaning you could still have Covid. (If you live with someone who has Covid and can't isolate from one another, you must wait 24 days to test if no symptoms)**
- **If you have no symptoms and no exposure to your knowledge, still get tested. This is because many people can have Covid, not know it, but spread it.**
- **If you have symptoms of Covid, even if mild, like a slight cold or symptoms that seem like allergies-get tested.**

Questions about supplements to prevent Covid:

- **There are studies looking at Vitamin D to prevent or lessen the severity of Covid infection which are not complete. People with low Vitamin D levels may not fight Covid as well. People in Wisconsin often have low Vitamin D levels in the cool months. It is reasonable to**

take 400-600 International Units of Vitamin D daily but understand QUALITY research has not proven it effective yet regarding Covid. However, it will likely cause no harm and research may show benefit.

- **Zinc: No quality studies specifically in Covid patients are done. Zinc helps decrease the symptoms of the common cold by a few hours. One side effect of zinc is the loss of smell, which could be confused with Covid. There is no proof yet Zinc is effective but over- all there is little harm.**

Please do all you can to stop the spread of Covid. If you are reading this, you may already do everything you can. But if you know others who are not, please encourage them to take Covid seriously, Menominee lives are depending on it.