Public Information Release

COVID-19 Update
June 9, 2020

Stay-at-home orders and travel restrictions across the United States prevented approximately 60 million COVID-19 infections according to a study released this week in the scientific journal *Nature*. The study shows that the shutdowns in March and April were effective at slowing the spread of COVID-19 at a time when testing was not widely available. The actions and sacrifices of Ohioans saved lives during this unprecedented time.

"When I hear people say COVID-19 hasn't been a big deal I take it as a compliment to public health. It means we are doing our job well," explains Health Commissioner Chris Cook. "This virus is a big deal. The majority of the public listened to what we have been saying and took it seriously. These actions directly resulted in lower infection rates."

Health Commissioner Cook notes that it is important to compare Madison County to other similar Ohio counties to get an idea of how the virus is spreading. There are nine rural counties in Ohio that are within 10% of the population total of Madison County. This results in a ten-county cohort that has a similar population and rural profile. Of the ten counties, only Madison has state correctional facilities. After adjusting for incarcerated individuals to provide a better comparison, Madison County currently has the second highest number of cases, second highest case rate, and second highest fatality rate when compared to the other nine counties. "Even if you subtract inmates out of the numbers to provide an apples-to-apples comparison to the other counties, Madison is still getting hit harder by COVID-19 than all of the other comparison counties except for one," Cook said. Madison County's current general population fatality rate of 5% is well above the CDC goal of 1-2%. COVID-19 is still here and it is still dangerous.

With testing more widely available, public health is working around the clock to conduct interviews and isolation of COVID-19 patients. Removing sick people from the general population is one of the most effective tools used by public health. Anyone who had close, extended contact with a sick person up to two days before he or she had symptoms could have been exposed to the virus. Every person should wear a facial covering to prevent unknowingly spreading the virus if they do happen to be in the pre-symptomatic stage.

There is a high risk of a second wave of infections occurring if individuals suddenly resume normal activities and gatherings. MCPH urges everyone to follow public health precautions such as social distancing, frequent hand washing, and wearing facial coverings. These efforts are proven to slow the spread of the virus. Slower spread will likely lead to more economic openings. It is not known if people who were sick once with COVID-19 can get sick again or if they will build immunity to the virus. It is also unknown exactly how long a person can spread the virus to others after they begin feeling better. COVID-19 is being studied worldwide every day to help health experts answer these important questions.

Get accurate local data on our website at covid.madisonph.org and on social media (@madisoncountyPH). Connect with us at 740-852-3065 or at info@madisonpublichealth.org. If you are concerned about your mental health, call the COVID CareLine at 1-800-720-9616 to talk to with a licensed mental health professional from 8am to 8pm, 7 days/week.