Public Information Release

Coronavirus Update for Madison County
March 17, 2020

Madison County Public Health (MCPH) is working on Coronavirus (COVID19) response every single day. You should monitor state and local news but rely on MCPH for reliable information on COVID19 right here in Madison County. Information and guidance for COVID19 changes daily. MCPH provides weekly Public Information Releases but will keep information current on our website at madisonpublichealth.org

Here are the latest local facts and advice about COVID19:

1. **There are zero confirmed cases in Madison County.** Every COVID19 test started by a doctor is not reported to MCPH – just like every flu test started by a doctor is not reported to MCPH. They get the results back and report positive confirmed cases to MCPH.

2. **There are confirmed cases in Ohio.** While we don't want people to get too caught up in numbers, you can access the latest numbers at coronavirus.ohio.gov. Cases are reported by county of residence. We need to start wrapping our heads around the fact that Madison County will eventually have a confirmed case. When that happens, stay calm and listen to our guidance (which is right here in this document).

3. **Community transmission of COVID19 in Ohio is happening.** We would like to keep it as low as possible - that's why there are community cancellations, postponement of gatherings, and social distancing. Community transmission occurs when people get sick who did not travel to a location with widespread COVID19 cases.

4. **Know what to do if you feel sick.** We need to protect our healthcare system and allow them to care for the sickest patients. It is important to conserve medical resources and space.
   If you are sick, stay home. This slows the spread and protects our most vulnerable neighbors. If you cannot manage your symptoms with over-the-counter medicine, we suggest you call your doctor. They can assess your symptoms and decide if you need to be seen in person.

   a. **Stay home for 14 days for**: Fever or cough you can manage at home with medication.
   b. **Call your doctor for**: Fever that remains over 103°F for more than two hours after taking Tylenol/Advil, a fever for more than 2 days, or you develop new symptoms.
   c. **Seek emergency medical care for**: Chest pain, shortness of breath, or coughing up stuff for more than one week and have an intermittent fever.

5. **Understand the local facts about testing.** Healthcare workers consider all options and they consult with public health department staff. Let healthcare providers do their job. COVID19 is not the only illness out there. Remember that testing is not widely available yet and is limited to those who are very sick and are high risk. This may include those who are hospitalized with a severe respiratory illness and have a chronic medical condition such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes or have a compromised immune system. Tests must be ordered, collected, and sent to a lab by a doctor. Tests are not available for purchase. We do not have tests at the health department. Use this general guideline for testing:

   a. **Not sick → No testing**
   b. **Mild illness** (fever/cough that can be managed at home) **→ No testing**
   c. **Severe illness** (shortness of breath, chest pain, hospitalization) **→ Seek testing**

6. **Avoid group gatherings and use social distancing.** You are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID19 if you are 1) an older adult, or 2) any age with a serious chronic medical condition like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or you have a compromised immune system. Think about alternatives to your normal lifestyle. Start doing things like: 1) watch religious services online, go to the grocery when there aren't a lot of people around, or use delivery services when you can. Decide what's necessary and what isn't. Follow all group gathering bans and orders from the Governor. You can read those orders on our website.

7. **Don't panic.** We know this is an overwhelming time for many. Take care of your mental health. Remember: measures are being taken to help avoid a major crisis in our healthcare system. Only use trusted sources of information such as the CDC, ODH, and MCPH. Call, FaceTime, video chat, or write a letter to your loved ones. Go outside and enjoy the weather. We are all in this together!

8. **Pay attention to travel bans.** Do not go on any cruise ship or river cruise. Do not travel to China, Iran, South Korea, Italy, or most of Europe. Reconsider other international travel as many borders are beginning to close. The latest CDC travel recommendations can be found at cdc.gov/travel and travel.state.gov.

9. **Don't buy face masks.** Face masks are for sick people and healthcare workers. That's it. Surgical masks work well to help limit the spread of illnesses from those who are already sick. Respirator masks are essential for our healthcare workers because they are in very close contact with sick people for long periods of time. Masks <u>do not</u> work well to help the general public stay healthy.

We are working to slow the spread of COVID19 in Ohio. You've heard this before, but prevention is still the best tool for COVID19 across Ohio. Your personal choices are going to play a huge part of how this illness, or any respiratory illness, plays out. We all have a personal responsibility to help prevent COVID19:

1. **Cover every cough and sneeze with your arm.**
2. **Stay home when you are sick**
3. **Wash your hands often.**
4. **Don't put your hands in your mouth, eyes, or nose.**
5. **Avoid people who are sick.**
6. **Clean frequently touched surfaces.**

If you know someone who isn't following these six hygienic practices, call them out on it. Don't be bashful.

Keep in mind that if you've traveled somewhere with widespread COVID19 cases in the last two weeks (or have been around a confirmed case of COVID19) and experience symptoms of COVID19 (unmanageable fever or cough, shortness of breath), you should CALL your healthcare provider first so they can evaluate you over the phone. If you do not have a healthcare provider, you should CALL Madison Health at 740-845-7333.

If you have an emergency, always call 911.

If you have questions about COVID19 you can contact the Ohio Department of Health COVID19 hotline at 833-427-5634 or Madison County Public Health at info@madisonpublichealth.org or 740-852-3065.

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Our Mission
We are committed to monitoring and responding to our community's health and wellness needs through innovative services, education, collaboration, and compassionate care.