



# Manitowoc County Health Department

*Mission: To Protect and Promote the Health of Manitowoc County in Partnership with our Community*

Environmental Health • Public Health Nursing • W.I.C. Program

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2020

### *COVID-19 Health Alert: Community Action Needed to Stop the Spread of SARS-CoV-2*

The County of Manitowoc is currently experiencing very high levels of COVID-19 infections and significant community spread. Manitowoc County Health Department, as well as area healthcare providers, have been under significant strain due to these increasing numbers. Wisconsin's daily numbers keep getting worse. In these two months, the seven-day average has increased over 500%. It took us seven and a half months to get to 100,000 cases and only took us 36 days to get to 200,000.

Our hospital systems are understaffed and in the past week, Wisconsin has seen a 15.9% increase in COVID patient hospitalizations compared to the previous week, as well as, a 13.6% increase in COVID patients in the ICU compared to the previous week. **This is an emergency.**

**Emergencies call for drastic and collective action.**

### **Act Now-Stop the Spread**

Manitowoc County Health Department needs the community to do the following:

- Wear a mask unless you are unable to do so for a medical reason
- Stay home- only travel for essentials. Support local businesses by ordering take-out or delivery
- Wash your hands frequently
- Social distance (stay 6 feet apart)
- Limit groups gatherings to 10
- Get your flu shot
  - This can decrease the amount of influenza hospitalizations and reduce the burden of our hospitals
- **Seek testing** if you have any symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of if you have a fever or not, or get tested if you have been identified as a close contact
  - Contact your healthcare provider or visit a community testing site. A list of testing sites can be found at the following link [Manitowoc County Testing Sites](#) or under the Manitowoc County Health Department's COVID-19 tab

- **Manitowoc has a National Guard Testing Site at the County Expo Center, Tuesday November 3 & 17 and December 1, for anyone who has been exposed or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms**
- It is recommended that if you are a close contact that you seek testing day 7-10 after your exposure to ensure an accurate result. Testing too early or too late can produce negative results
- **Stay home after you have been tested and await results**
- A negative test result does not release a close contact from quarantine

### **Positive Individuals**

- If you test positive, stay home and Isolate for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset. If no symptoms, remain isolated for 10 days from the date of testing
- All household members are close contacts and should also remain at home
- Inform all other close contacts of your test result
- A Close contacts is someone who:
  - Was within 6ft of the positive individual for more than 15 minutes in a 24 hour period starting from 2 days before the positive person experienced symptoms- regardless of if they were wearing a mask or not
  - Any person who had physical contact ( hugs, handshakes), for any period of time during the infectious period
- Inform your employer or school of your result
  - You are able to return to normal daily activities on day 11, provided that you have been symptom free for 24 hours
- All Close contacts should quarantine for 14 days from the last contact with the positive individual. For household members, this may be longer if you cannot fully separate in the house

**For more information and guidance visit the [COVID-19 FAQs for Positives and Close Contacts](#) on the Manitowoc County Health Department web page**

### **Businesses**

- Promote opportunities to work from home
- Support physical distancing inside your facility
- Require employees and patrons to wear a mask
- Bars, restaurants, hospitality and retail: limit building capacity to 25%
- If an employee tests positive or are identified as close contacts, allow them to isolate or quarantine to prevent further spread through your business

We're all tired and we want to return to normal, but that cannot happen until we get the virus under control. Remember you can have, and spread COVID-19 without realizing you have it. Which means you could be the reason your friends or extended family members or the server at the restaurant – really, anyone you interact with – gets sick. For more COVID-19 guidance visit the Manitowoc County Health Department web page at <https://www.co.manitowoc.wi.us>