



LAPEER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
1800 Imlay City Road
Lapeer, MI 48446

Date: March 13, 2020

Update Regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus

(Note: Be sure to check out the new information hotline number near the end)

As partners in protecting the health and safety of our families and community, I'd like to try to update you on the latest information surrounding the COVID-19 situation in Michigan as it is this evening.

Last evening we learned of an addition 12 cases of COVID-19 in our State, none of which are currently in our county. This afternoon, March 13, 2020, the State of Michigan announced an additional 4 cases, bringing the total in Michigan to 16 confirmed cases. We know that this number will grow before it begins to subside.

* The purpose of this update is not to instill more fear, but rather, to give you information that you can use to better understand, and to help protect yourself and vulnerable family and friends.

What is Known?

- The virus causing COVID-19 is a new virus (2019 Novel Coronavirus) that has not been previously identified
- Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear anywhere from 2 – 14 days after exposure and include –
 - Fever (generally 100.4 F or greater)
 - Cough
 - Shortness of Breath
- A little over 80% will develop mild symptoms, which may include mild pneumonia
- Approx. 14% will develop severe illness (significant shortness of breath, hypoxia (or at least 50% lung involvement)
- Approx. 5% will go on to critical illness (resp. failure, shock, multisystem failure)
- Those at greatest risk are:
 - Ages 70-79 yrs. (approx. 8%)
 - Ages 80 + (approx. 15%)
 - Those with underlying health conditions, esp. cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic resp. conditions, cancer

Why Are We Hearing of Closures, and limited large assemblies?

- On Thursday evening, March 12, Gov. Whitmer announced plans to close K-12 Schools for 3 weeks, in addition to other recommendations.
- On Friday, March 13, she issued an executive order stating, ".....all assemblages of more than 250 people in a single space and all events of more than 250 people are prohibited in this state, except for assemblages for the purpose of: industrial or manufacturing work; mass transit; or the purchase of groceries or consumer goods....." (See Michigan.gov/coronavirus for full document).

So why are we limiting large numbers of people in more confined spaces? Several reasons for this are:

- To slow the spread of disease to ensure that medical facilities have adequate staffing and resources for those who are sick and vulnerable populations
- To help decrease the numbers of our vulnerable population who are exposed and can potentially contract the virus that causes COVID-19

Reducing Opportunities for Exposure

The best way to slow the spread of disease is to reduce the risk of exposure. Each of us should do our part to help decrease opportunities for disease transmission. Thus, we, along with the CDC and MDHHS, recommend several measures:

- TRAVEL: Avoid unnecessary travel, especially to areas with a higher incidence of disease. Information on this can be found on the CDC and MDHHS websites.
- As directed by the governor, we recommend canceling or rescheduling large gatherings or events.
- Stay home if you are sick. If you develop symptoms, do not head to the emergency rooms, urgent cares, and physician offices – you do not want to spread the disease to others. Instead, phone your physician to discuss your health concerns. They will direct you on what you need to do from there.
- Continue to use good hygiene practices:
 - Wash hands frequently with soap and running water (best method); or use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol content if handwashing is not feasible at that time
 - Cough into your sleeve or a tissue
 - Avoid handshakes
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Remember that there is a lot of influenza circulating, along with other viruses. COVID-19 symptoms tend to be (as stated earlier) fever of 100.4 F, dry cough, and shortness of breath. If unsure, phone and ask.
- Help stop rumors. Before passing on information, be sure that it is accurate and current.
- Ask questions or consult a good information site:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/nCOV-2019_General_Fact_Sheet_v2-4-20_680266_7.pdf (Informational document)
 - <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus>

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- Beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 14, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is launching a statewide HOTLINE to respond to health-related questions about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- The hotline will be open 7 days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- The NUMBER is: **1-888-535-6136**