

Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19

November 17, 2020

- ***What is COVID-19?***
 - COVID-19 is a highly infectious and fast-spreading disease caused by a new form of coronavirus that was identified in late 2019.
 - There is currently NO vaccine to prevent COVID-19.
 - Symptoms associated with this illness vary from person to person. Some people who become infected will not experience any symptoms at all. However, the majority of people do develop symptoms and their effects can range from mild to severe and in certain cases, have resulted in extreme health complications and death. Positive cases of COVID-19 are currently rising at an alarming rate in the Isleta community.
 - The most common symptoms include cough, headache, body aches, fever/chills and loss of sense of taste and smell.
- ***How do people get the virus?***
 - Because this is a new virus and illness, we are still studying and learning about how spread and infection occurs. We do know that the main form of spread is from person to person.
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
 - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
 - Studies conducted by the CDC indicate that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. That includes people who are pre-symptomatic (they have not yet developed symptoms) and those that are asymptomatic (they never develop symptoms of COVID-19). Case investigation data in New Mexico suggest that pre-symptomatic and/or asymptomatic spread is common. This makes it much harder to prevent the spread of COVID-19 because people may not know that they have the disease and can easily and unknowingly spread it to others.
- ***What can I do to help prevent further spread of the virus?***
 - Just like with many other illnesses, the best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is to avoid exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. This requires taking steps to protect yourself and to protect others.
 - Wear a mask or cloth face covering. In the Pueblo of Isleta, everyone is required to wear a face covering when in public except when drinking, eating, or under medical instruction. Masks and cloth face coverings may prevent people who do not know they have the virus from transmitting it to others. Wearing a mask is a sign of respect for other people and demonstrates your desire not to be a source of infection for them, just as you would like for them to be looking out to protect you.
 - Do not host or attend gatherings of people you don't live with.
 - Clean your hands often and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Wash with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or if you are unable to wash your hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with more than 60% alcohol.
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes.
 - Stay home except for essential purposes like getting groceries and/or to seek healthcare.
 - Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with other people who are sick.
 - Practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and others.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- **What activities are safe for my family and I to partake in?**

- Below is a great resource to gauge whether or not certain activities are safe. With the numbers of infected people increasing at an alarming rate in the Isleta community as well as in the state of New Mexico, the best recommendation at this time is to **STAY HOME** and stay safe. Only venture out for essential needs including work, healthcare appointments, and shopping for necessities.
- This is also not a good time to be hosting family “get-togethers” such as birthday parties, anniversary dinners or other gatherings that normally would be attended by multiple families. Data has shown that family gatherings have been the main source of infection here in Isleta in the recent weeks. **PLEASE DO NOT HOST OR ATTEND GATHERINGS.**
- With the holidays around the corner, many families are accustomed to gathering and enjoying the company of relatives. However, this year, **IT IS NOT SAFE TO DO SO.** Please keep holiday activities limited to those people within your immediate household. This will help ensure the safety and health of yourself and your loved ones.



Although we are all doing our part to keep safe, there may be an instance where you come in contact with someone who is sick. The following pertains to those situations:

- ***I heard someone I have seen recently has tested positive for the virus. Do I need to be tested?***
 - First, REMAIN CALM. It is a very scary and uncertain time right now, but please be assured that the Isleta Health Center is working hard to ensure the safety of everyone. We are closely monitoring and doing extensive contact tracing on every person who tests positive at our facility so that we can inform those who are at risk of getting the virus timely and efficiently.
 - You likely DO NOT need a test if you have NOT been a “close contact” of the person who has tested positive. To be considered a close contact, you must have been within 6 feet of the person for more than 15 minutes (with or without a mask).
- ***If you receive a phone call informing you that you have been deemed a close contact of a person who is positive, here is what you should do:***
 - If you are not at home, you should immediately return home to begin your 14-day quarantine period.
 - Reach out to the Isleta COVID-19 hotline, 505-869-9720. It can then be determined if you are INDEED a close contact and if so, whether you should be tested.
 - YOU DO NOT NEED TO get tested immediately after being informed you have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive.
 - The reason for this is that it takes some time for the virus to be detectable in your body if you have become infected. This time frame is 7-10 days after you have been in contact with the person known to have the virus. Therefore, as long as you have no symptoms, it is recommended to wait 7-10 days after having close contact so that you won’t be tested too early (as this can lead to your test coming back as negative, when you still could be positive). Call 505-869-9720 if you develop symptoms at any point during your quarantine.
- ***I have been tested for the virus, what should I do now?***
 - Below is a great chart to help you understand what you should do while you are awaiting your test results as well as what you should do once you do receive your results.

