



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Decatur, IL - Macon County Health Department (MCHD) is working daily with our local health care partners and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) since we first became aware in December 2019 to respond to the constantly evolving novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The MCHD follows the guidance and protocol provided by IDPH. In addition to working with IDPH in this preparedness effort, we are also collaborating with our community partners to be prepared for COVID-19 and other emergencies. As always, know that we are all working very hard to prepare our community. We ask that everyone please assist us. Community residents can take many steps to help prevent the spread of illness, including COVID-19.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), common human coronaviruses usually cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illness, like the common cold. Symptoms may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Human coronaviruses most commonly spread from an infected person to others through the air by coughing or sneezing; close personal contact such as touching or shaking hands; and touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

The CDC advises that people follow these tips to help prevent respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick with respiratory symptoms.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- If you have not already, get a flu shot and if you are eligible, a pneumonia shot. Make sure all of your vaccinations are up to date. Please continue to follow the guidelines provide by public health. Please help us spread facts not fear.

IDPH and local health departments have implemented heightened surveillance to identify and test patients most likely to have Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Public health experts are communicating with and educating health care providers and other public health partners about the current situation. Measures are being developed to prevent the spread of illness in Illinois. Frequent communication with the public will be available through the IDPH Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Page.

IDPH, in coordination with the Illinois Poison Control Center, has launched the Illinois Novel Coronavirus Hotline and email address to answer questions that Local Health Departments, clinicians, and the general public may have regarding COVID-19. The hotline and email address were created to provide consistent information, answer questions, share facts about symptoms, and provide up-to-date information from the CDC. Illinoisans can dial 1-800-889-3931 twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week or email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV to get their questions answered.

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