GCHD
GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT

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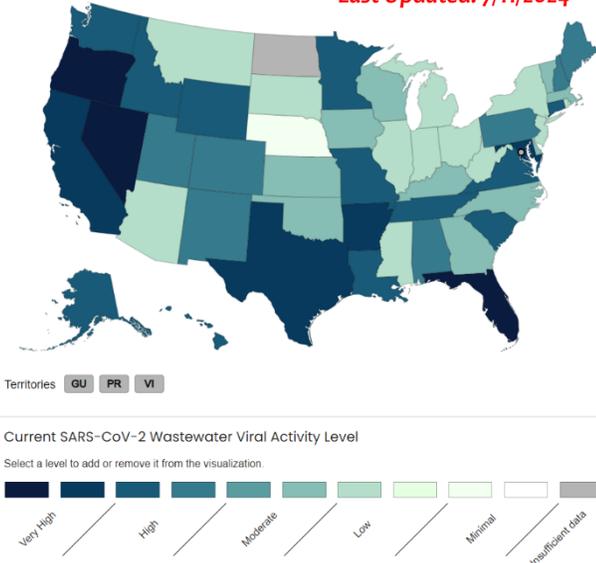| FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 7/16/2024	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT
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Protect Yourself From COVID-19 This Summer

GRANT COUNTY, WA – In June 2024, **Grant County Health District (GCHD) observed an increase in COVID-19 infections on a local, state, and national level.**

COVID-19 Current Wastewater Viral Activity Levels Map
Last Updated: 7/11/2024

Territories GU PR VI

Current SARS-CoV-2 Wastewater Viral Activity Level
Select a level to add or remove it from the visualization.

Very High   High   Moderate   Low   Minimal   Insufficient data

- In Washington, there was a 14% increase in COVID-associated emergency department visits towards the end of June. Nationwide that increase was over 23%.
- In Grant County, COVID-19-associated hospitalizations were back to over 2% for the first time since the end of the respiratory virus season in mid-April.
- In Grant County, levels of COVID-19 detected in wastewater increased sharply between May and June. **Washington continues to report high levels of COVID-19 wastewater activity as of July 11, 2024.** (See map to the left).

An increase in COVID-19 infections during the summer is becoming more common. People tend to spend more time in larger groups while traveling, attending festivals, and participating in other summer events.

"COVID-19 is a year-round virus that can cause illness even during the warmer months," states Amber McCoy, GCHD Investigations & Response Manager. "If you are not up to date with your COVID-19 vaccine, we encourage you to get vaccinated as soon as possible so you don't miss out on any of your favorite summer activities".

COVID-19 Vaccine – Everyone aged 5 years and older should get 1 dose of the most recently updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect against serious illness from COVID-19.

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

- An additional COVID-19 vaccine dose is now recommended for adults 65 years or older at least 4 months following their last dose.
- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised may also get additional doses of the updated COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccination reduces the risk of severe illness and hospitalization by about 50% compared to people not up to date on vaccination.

Protect High-Risk Groups - Groups at high risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, include:
- People over the age of 50
- People with weakened immune systems
- People with certain conditions such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes, or lung disease.
    - View the full list here - People with Certain Medical Conditions | CDC.

In addition to the COVID-19 vaccine, you can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 to high-risk groups by:
- Staying away from people at high risk of getting very sick until:
    - 10 days have passed since your symptoms started,
    - 10 days have passed since you tested positive (if you never developed symptoms), or
    - You test negative for COVID-19 with an antigen test (such as an at-home test)
- Avoiding healthcare facilities, especially long-term care facilities, if you are experiencing any respiratory symptoms.
- Wearing a mask when around individuals at risk of severe illness from COVID-19 if you are symptomatic.

Positive COVID-19 Test – The isolation requirements for COVID-19 were updated in March 2024. If you test positive for COVID-19, stay home and away from others until both of the following have been true for at least 24 hours:

- Your symptoms are getting better overall, and
- You have not had a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication).

When you go back to your normal activities, wear a protective mask and take added precautions over the next 5 days. Precautions include steps to improve airflow, practicing good hand hygiene, cleaning regularly, physical distancing, and testing when you will be around other people indoors.

Treatment for High-Risk Groups – Antiviral medications are available and recommended for people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. If you test positive for COVID-19 and fall into the high-risk groups listed above, you should talk to your healthcare provider about getting treatment.

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