



The following is a collaboratively-issued statement from: Brown County Public Health, Oneida Nation Health Department, City of De Pere Health Department, Manitowoc County Health Department, Advocate Aurora Health/Aurora BayCare, Bellin Health, Prevea Health, HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Hospitals, Door County Medical Center, Holy Family Memorial and N.E.W. Community Clinic.

Thanksgiving Holiday Week + Rising COVID-19 Numbers & Hospitalizations = A Reason to be Concerned

Area residents urged to stop, think and plan ahead for holiday gatherings

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 22, 2021

Area public health departments and health systems are expressing concern about the uptick of COVID-19 in Northeast Wisconsin:

- The positivity rate is increasing and is currently at levels not seen since January 2021
- The number of COVID-19 hospitalizations has increased
- Hospitalized patients are trending younger (20s, 30s, 40s, 50s); they are sicker and hospitalized for longer periods of time than in the past
- Deaths continue to occur on a regular basis
- The vast majority of those hospitalized are unvaccinated

Area residents are being urged to stop, think and plan ahead if they're hosting or attending holiday gatherings this year. That includes limiting the size of gatherings, social distancing, masking and getting vaccinated. "We know and understand that people are tired of hearing about taking precautions," stated Brown County Public Health Officer, Anna Destree. "But precautions are necessary if we're going to keep people safe; and right now, we're headed in the wrong direction."

Recommendations for keeping your gatherings safe and reducing the spread of COVID-19 include:

- Don't attend or host a gathering if you don't feel well.
 - Cold and flu symptoms can be very similar to COVID-19, so it's important to be tested for COVID. Staying home is the best option if you're not well.

(more)

- If you've been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, get tested and stay home.
- Hold gatherings outdoors if possible.
- If indoors, and there are unvaccinated attendees, everyone should wear a mask when not eating or drinking.
- Socially distance whenever you can.
 - Space out chairs at the dinner table
 - Spread out other seating areas as well
 - Don't put food in a single area where people will congregate

"The pandemic is still a cause for concern," added Destree. "Unfortunately, deaths from COVID-19 are still occurring weekly in our area and will continue to increase as rates go up. This is especially tragic since the vaccine, which saves lives, is widely available."

Getting fully vaccinated is the single most important thing people can do to stop the spread of COVID-19. If you are not vaccinated, starting the process now means you'll be fully vaccinated before other upcoming holidays. You are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two weeks after you've received either the single dose vaccine, Johnson & Johnson (J&J), or the second dose of the two dose vaccines, Pfizer or Moderna.

If you are already fully vaccinated, get a booster shot as soon as you are eligible. Boosters are now available for all fully vaccinated adults; six months following your second dose of Pfizer or Moderna or two months following the single dose of J&J.

To find a COVID-19 vaccine provider, contact your local health system or call 2-1-1 or 1-877-947-2211.

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