



Community • Independence • Empowerment

Date: February 27, 2020
From: Wanda Brown, RN, MSN & Heidi Oberlin, RN, MPH
To: ISK Team Members
Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Influenza (FLU)

Are you concerned about COVID-19, hearing conflicting messages from the media and online, and wondering what ISK is doing to prepare? The CDC is putting their concerns to work preparing for the next steps while acknowledging that during any outbreak of a new virus, there is a lot of uncertainty. We are following their lead and are in close communication and contact with several agencies from which we receive real time updates, information, and direction: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and the Kalamazoo County Human Services Department (Kalamazoo County Health Department). We are aware of the increase of information being reported via all kinds of media, including social, but we will follow the directions and recommendations from reputable healthcare organizations.

It is the intent of our team to receive guidance and advice from the appropriate sources and to keep ISK staff informed. Please note the information received is very fluid; changes and updates will occur on a continual basis. The information that follows (including hyperlinks to even more information) is our first summary. You might have noticed the subject line above; at this time flu remains a greater threat and it's not too late to get vaccinated. Please contact either one of us or your representative of the Health and Safety Committee if you need more information.

Kalamazoo Disease Surveillance Update – February 13, 2020 information received from MDHHS Region 5 Epidemiologist's Update:

INFLUENZA

Michigan

- Michigan influenza activity level: Widespread
- A total of 452 specimens have tested positive at MDHHS BOL: Influenza A (H1N1) – 181; Influenza A (H3N2) – 21; Influenza B – 250
- Two (2) pediatric influenza (B) deaths have been confirmed by MDHHS
- *We are encouraging continued influenza vaccine, greater risk to U.S. population than COVID-19*

COVID-19

- *Low risk to our community*
- *Health department monitoring Medium risk travelers*
- *Symptomatic travelers are being isolated near quarantine stations*
- *Call your local health department if you have a patient with China travel and respiratory symptoms*
 - *Will verify risk and coordinate specimen collection/transport*
- *72 patients evaluated in MI, 5 tested all negative*
- *13 cases confirmed in the U.S.*

- *New guidance from CDC for Business and industry* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-business-response.html>
 - *Allow for time off for travelers returning and needing quarantine*
 - *Emphasize routine cleaning*
- *New Interim IC guidance* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and will likely not be one available for the public for another year. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - 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 using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
 - Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
 - CDC does **not** recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for [health workers](#) and [people who are taking care of someone in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- For information about handwashing, see [CDC’s Handwashing](#) website
- For information specific to healthcare, see [CDC’s Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings](#)
- These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have [specific guidance for travelers](#).

Highlights from yesterday’s CDC telebriefing transcript follow below. Nancy Messonnier, MD, Director of the Center for the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases was speaking:

“At this time, there’s no vaccine to protect against this new virus and no medications approved to treat it. Non-pharmaceutical interventions or NPIs will be the most important tools in our response to this virus. What these interventions look like at the community level will vary depending on local conditions. What is appropriate for one community seeing local transmission won’t necessarily be appropriate for a community where no local transmission has occurred. Based on what is known now, we would implement these NPI measures in a very aggressive, proactive way as we have been doing with our containment efforts. NPIs routinely recommended for prevention of respiratory virus transmission include everyday personal protective measures. These are preventive measures we recommend during influenza season. These NPIs are recommended during a pandemic regardless of the severity level of the respiratory illness.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- 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 using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.”

References

- [2020 MI Communicable Disease Surveillance and Reporting Changes](#)
- [Cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheet.html)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-business-response.html>
- <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs>
- <https://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/>