



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Proactive Prevention is the Best Defense

There are currently no COVID-19 positive test results within the six counties served by the Northeast Colorado Health Department. While there are people across the entire state of Colorado being tested at this time, not everyone is being tested. Many physicians are following the testing guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Resources need to be thoughtfully used during this critical time. And those individuals who are screened and found to be at highest risk are the ones who will be prioritized for testing.

If someone does receive a COVID-19 positive test result they will be asked to stay home for 14 days and do everything their medical provider asks them to do. This will most likely include drinking plenty of fluids, getting plenty of rest, eating healthy and treating their fever. There is no cure or treatment for this virus at this time.

COVID-19 is a new virus, which means scientists and public health experts are still learning how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes and to what extent it may spread in the United States. There is currently no vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19. Therefore, proactive prevention is the best defense.

Taking drastic measures to limit the transmission rate of COVID-19, like closing schools, canceling public events and sending people home from work, may seem like an overreaction when there are no presumptive positive cases in our area. However, such measures are most effective early in the outbreak. The goal is to ensure people don't all get sick at the same time. This would overload our limited healthcare resources in rural areas.

Social distancing helps us to dramatically slow the number of new people infected each day, and this is what many of you have heard referred to as 'flattening the curve'. The goal of this is to lessen the burden on our healthcare system. What can you do? You can do your part by staying home if you are sick and following your doctor's recommendations on self-isolation. Doing so, will help not only stop more potential spread of COVID-19, but also any other illnesses that are circulating. COVID-19 isn't the only illness that is circulating at this time. Influenza and colds are circulating as well. These actions empower us all to help affect the most vulnerable among us, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems.

In January the first person was diagnosed with COVID-19 in the United States which was followed by a trickle of additional cases and two months later there is now a steady stream of newly diagnosed cases each day. This so-called 'exponential curve' has experts worried because if the number of cases were to double every three days, there would be about a hundred million cases in the United States by May. The spread can be slowed if people practice "social distancing" by avoiding public gatherings, stay home more often and keep their distance from others. If people are less mobile and interact with others less, the virus has fewer opportunities to spread.

During a time such as this there are often lots of information being communicated by a variety of sources. In times of crisis, misinformation often travels quickly. How can one know what is true and what is not? It is important to refer to trusted sources to ensure you are getting truthful and current information. Get reliable, up-to-date information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html> or <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/2019-novel-coronavirus>.

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. Everyone reacts differently to stress but there are some steps you can take to reduce stress in yourself and your family. Sharing the facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and the people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful. Additional steps you can take to reduce stress include taking breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories. Repeatedly hearing about the pandemic can be very upsetting. Take care of yourself by eating healthy, well-balanced meals, get exercise and be sure to get plenty of sleep. Make time to unwind and do activities you enjoy. Also, check on your friends and neighbors by giving them a phone call.

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