



ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ITASCA COUNTY SEES SPIKE IN HOSPITALIZATION DUE TO COVID

(Grand Rapids, Minn., **Dec. 1, 2020**) –The impact of COVID-19 has deepened in Itasca County in recent weeks, with increases in hospitalizations and double the number in intensive care.

As of Dec. 1, hospitalizations of Itasca County residents have spiked over the past 10 days, from 29 to 41. The number of Itasca County residents requiring intensive care units doubled, from five to 11.

In better news, the 14-day rate of positive diagnoses per 10,000 Itasca County residents dropped slightly, from 129.9 to 128 as of Nov. 26, the first sign of stabilization in several weeks.

Active COVID cases remaining in isolation as of Nov. 29 stand at 245 in Itasca County. Cases identified as positive in the past 14 days are 489, down by 80 since reported a week ago. In the past seven days, there have been 237 new cases identified, similar to the previous week.

“We all can be grateful for the many health care workers who are sacrificing to be with our sick and worried loved ones and friends right now,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health division manager. “And the best way to show our thanks is keep doing what we know works: faithfully wear a mask, avoid gatherings, keep six feet distance and wash our hands.”

“Also in the spirit of gratitude, we thank the many organizations who have been working together faithfully to share information and resources since the beginning of the pandemic,” said Chandler. “The Itasca area is blessed to have skilled and committed organizations and leaders, including Ross Resources, Second Harvest, Lakewood Surgery Center, Kootasca, Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, IMCare, City of LaPrairie, Itasca County Probation, Itasca Economic Development Corporation, Itasca County Public Health, City of Keewatin, Itasca County Emergency Management, Progressive Care, Itasca County Health and Human Services, Bigfork Valley, Blandin Foundation, Grace House, Floodwood Schools, Scenic Rivers, First Call for Help, Northland Counseling/Recovery Center, Itasca County Administration, Itasca County Sheriff’s Department, Support Within Reach, Itasca Community College, Nashwauk-Keewatin Schools, Project Care, Deer River Schools, Essentia Health, Majestic Pines, Bigfork and Grand Rapids Schools and the City of Grand Rapids.”

For those seeking testing, call ahead to Essentia Deer River, Bigfork Valley and Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital for details. Also, state-provided tests are available through the National Guard



Armory in Hibbing (<https://www.primarybio.com/r/hibbing>) and an at-home test ordered online (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/athome.html>).

If you are waiting for COVID test results, stay home. If you experience even mild symptoms that resemble a cold or allergies, stay home and seek testing. If you have a positive test, your household members also need to quarantine for 14 days from last exposure.

Itasca residents with questions or concerns may leave them at the Itasca County COVID message line, with calls returned 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday. The Itasca COVID line number is 218-327-6784. Current local data and information also can be found at the county’s website here: <https://www.co.itasca.mn.us/798/COVID-19-Coronavirus-Information>

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Note to media: Itasca County Health Department will host 30-minute press briefings on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. as needed. The next scheduled briefing will be Dec. 3, with an update from area school superintendents. Contact anna.anttila@co.itasca.mn.us for more information.

Itasca County Public Health media contacts

Kelly Chandler (218-327-6144 and Kelly.chandler@co.itasca.mn.us) or Anna Anttila (anna.anttila@co.itasca.mn.us).