

ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER

1209 SE 2nd Ave, Grand Rapids MN 55744

Hearing impaired number TDD: 218-327-5549

(218) 327-2941

www.co.itasca.mn.us

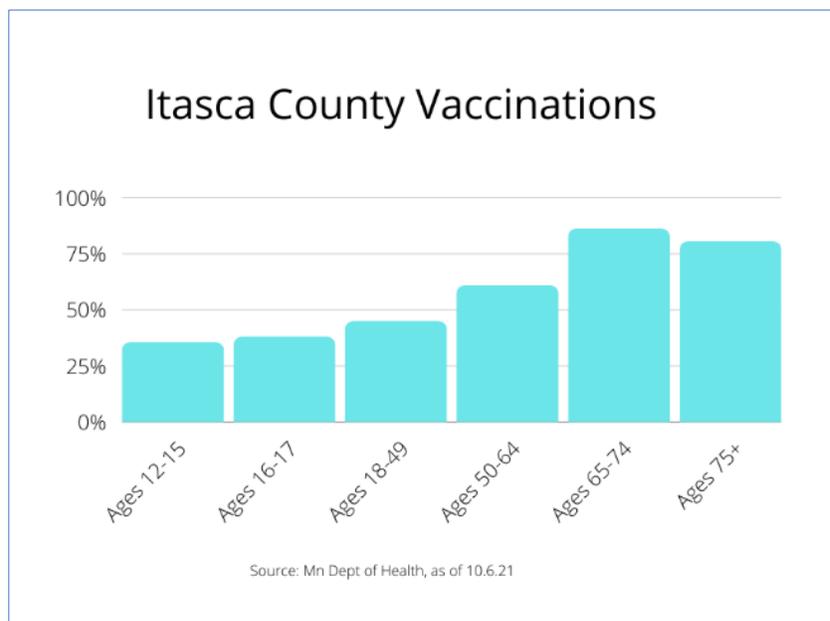
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ITASCA COUNTY CLASSIFIED AS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK FOR THOSE UNVACCINATED

(Grand Rapids, Minn. – **Oct. 8, 2021**) – Itasca County is seeing an average of 35 new COVID diagnoses a day and is considered by the Centers for Disease Control as a place of extremely high risk for those without COVID vaccination. The county’s 14-day case rate has spiked again, now to 94.9 per 10,000 residents. Over the past week (Oct. 1-6), 248 additional cases of COVID infection were identified in the county. Two additional residents have died due to COVID, a male and female, both in their 60s.

Itasca has the highest rate of COVID infection and one of the lowest levels of vaccination among Northeastern Minnesota counties. Those who have received COVID vaccinations in Itasca County, however, are at far lower risk for serious illness, with less than two percent of local cases occurring among those previously vaccinated. Free vaccines and boosters are widely available in the county through pharmacies, clinics, and public health events.

Half of the total population of Itasca County currently is vaccinated and 58 percent of those eligible (ages 12 and older) have received at least their first dose of vaccine.



“Right now, Itasca County is on a difficult path. We are headed to the COVID peaks we saw last November, which had a disastrous effect on our businesses, families and schools,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health division manager. “One out of every eight Itasca residents has contracted COVID during the pandemic and 75 of our neighbors have died.

“Vaccines are absolutely the best way to turn things around. There is no hiding from COVID, so if not for the community, then for the health of your family and yourself, get vaccinated, avoid indoor crowds and absolutely stay home if you are sick. Get tested if you have symptoms, even the sniffles – don’t be the person that created a surge among friends, family members, coworkers, classmates, your congregation, or your child’s team. If you have COVID, getting diagnosed and treated as early as possible could save your life or, at the very least, tens of thousands of dollars in medical costs.”

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 through Friday. The Itasca COVID line number is 218-327-6784.

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Itasca County Public Health media contact: Kelly Chandler, 218-327-6144 and Kelly.Chandler@co.itasca.mn.us.