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COVID-19 Update: Region Experiencing a Springtime Swell

*An Important Message from Dr. Erik McLaughlin and the
Lake County Health Services Department's Public Health Division*

LAKE COUNTY, CA (June 6th, 2022) – As COVID activity is increasing around the country and in Lake County, I want to take time to inform you of concerns. We are seeing an increase in COVID cases. Our testing shows that 10.7% of all patients testing for COVID are testing positive. This number has been gradually increasing from 2%, over the last few weeks. Nearby counties are reinstating indoor masking requirements. At this time, I would like to strongly emphasize the importance of using a properly fitting mask in indoor public settings and getting vaccinated if you are not already. If you have symptoms of Covid-19, please get tested and speak with your healthcare provider.

The Bay Area now has California's highest COVID infection rates. This swell of infections is largely due to the continued emergence of highly contagious Omicron subvariants. Even though the more transmissible BA.2.12.1 Omicron subvariant became officially dominant in the United States last month, it is already being displaced by the new BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants. These two newer variants are said to be contributing to overlapping waves of omicron in part because of their abilities to reinfect. Lake County is seeing increases in reported cases, levels of virus during sewage surveillance, and hospitalizations. Actual case rates are higher than those reported because of the widespread use of at-home tests.

The tragic milestone of one million deaths across the United States from COVID gives weight to the need for continued vigilance, although we are all understandably fatigued. In Lake County, hospitalizations are increasing but remain relatively low compared to previous surges and well within the capacity of the hospital system. Approximately 72% of eligible Lake County residents have been fully vaccinated or received their initial dose, reducing the severity of the disease even as case rates increase. If you have received your primary series of vaccines, it is important to get a booster in accordance with the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendations here: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html

Vaccination remains the best protection against severe disease and death from COVID, but new oral antiviral therapeutics by Pfizer (Paxlovid) and Merck (Molnupiravir) have allowed for another layer of protection. Test to Treat locations offer end-to-end testing, linkage to healthcare providers, and medication dispensing, available on-site, enabling a seamless patient experience. A list of Test to Treat providers and locations is available on our website here: health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Testing

For additional information about COVID-19, please visit the following websites:

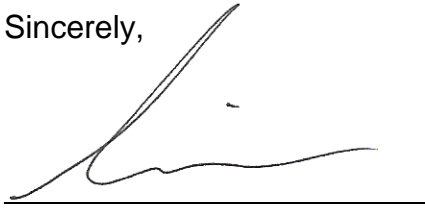
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Assessing Risk Factors for Severe COVID-19 Illness: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/assessing-risk-factors.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Treatments and Medications: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/treatments-for-severe-illness

County of Lake Health Services' COVID-19 Resources & Data: health.lakecountyca.gov

Sincerely,



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