



Eastern Idaho Public Health

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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First Case of COVID-19 Confirmed in Madison County

(SE Idaho) – Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) has confirmed the first positive case of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Madison County. This individual is a BYU-Idaho student in his 20s with recent out-of-state travel to a COVID-19 affected area. The individual is in his apartment in Rexburg recovering from mild symptoms and did not require hospitalization.

The patient's healthcare provider acted appropriately with ruling out influenza, discussing exposure risk, and appropriately determining that a COVID-19 test was necessary. Clinical specimens were then collected and sent to a commercial lab, where laboratory testing confirmed the infection.

The patient became symptomatic on Sunday, March 8, returned from out-of-state to Madison County on Wednesday, March 11. Since he wasn't feeling well, he stayed in his apartment until he sought testing for COVID-19 on Thursday, March 12. After the test, he was asked to self-isolate in his apartment pending notification of his test results. Epidemiologists with EIPH will determine reasonable risk criteria for locations visited by this individual and any close contacts of that individual who were possibly exposed. If other people are found to have possibly been exposed, public health officials will contact them, provide guidance, will monitor them closely for symptoms, and perform testing on them if deemed appropriate.

Additional case-specific information about this individual is confidential and will not be released.

Please see the criteria below that will be still be used to determine who needs to be tested for COVID-19:

If you have no symptoms, you will not be tested... and there is no need for you to be tested.

If you have fever with a cough or fever with shortness of breath, first call your healthcare provider.

- Advise them of the following: your symptoms, any recent travel history, and any contact with a person CONFIRMED to have COVID-19.
- They will advise you what to do.
- DO NOT show up unannounced; call ahead first.

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- If you don't have a healthcare provider, know there are options available and guidance can be given if you need help finding one.
- If your provider advises you to come in for a check-up, they will determine the need to run a COVID-19 test.

Your healthcare provider can choose to run a COVID-19 test if:

- You have been evaluated for other respiratory illnesses.
- You have symptoms with a history of recent travel OR
- You have symptoms and contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19.

Visit the emergency room (ER) or call 911 only if respiratory illness is significant enough for you to need emergency care (think of it this way: would you have sought ER care 5 months ago for the symptoms you are currently experiencing? If so, visit the ER.)

Another important consideration: just like a positive flu test isn't necessarily needed for a healthcare provider to treat flu-like symptoms (or for a person to stay home and care for themselves with medication, rest, fluid intake, avoiding others, etc.), the same is true of COVID-19. Your healthcare provider is your #1 resource for accurate, timely information. Please do not "work around" their advice. We are seeing people in our ERs wanting to be tested after a healthcare has already told them testing wasn't indicated, based on their unique situation.

Gerri Rackow, EIPH Director states, "Your cooperation in this matter, regarding testing, is greatly appreciated. We know the uncertainty of this pandemic can be frightening for some. However, there are simple everyday actions we can all take every day to stay healthy and reduce the spread of illness."

These actions include:

- Avoiding people who are sick and if you are sick, limit contact with others as much as possible.
- Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs using a disinfecting solution.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.

For questions, guidance, and information about COVID-19, please visit EIPH's website at www.EIPH.Idaho.gov. You can also follow us on Facebook at @EIPH.Idaho.

We also have a hotline number that can be reached by calling 208-522-0310 or 855-533-3160 (toll free).

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