

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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First Case of COVID-19 Confirmed in Eastern Idaho

(SE Idaho) – Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) and Teton Valley Health have confirmed the first positive case of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in an adult under the age of 60 in Teton County.

This individual contracted COVID-19 due to contact with a confirmed case in a neighboring state. The individual is home 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 the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories, where laboratory testing confirmed the infection.

Epidemiologists with EIPH will determine reasonable risk criteria for locations visited by this patient and any close contacts of that individual who were possibly exposed. If other people are found to have possibly been exposed, health officials will provide guidance to them and will monitor them closely for symptoms.

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

"We know the uncertainty of this pandemic can be frightening for some. However, there are simple everyday actions we can all take to stay healthy and prevent illness", said Geri Rackow, EIPH Director. 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.

EIPH, in collaboration with key stakeholders, are monitoring the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation very closely both domestically and internationally. We are working with hospitals, healthcare providers, county emergency managers, first responders, schools, local and state governments. We have taken many steps to prepare our agencies for this and feel confident in our efforts to respond.

With COVID-19 testing becoming commercially available late last week, more Idahoans are having the opportunity to be tested. Following is the criteria to use to determine if you need to call a healthcare provider to discuss testing:

- Have a fever with cough, or
- Have a fever with shortness of breath **AND**,
- Traveled to a COVID-19 affected area within the prior 14 days or
- Had close contact with a lab-confirmed COVID-19 patient within the prior 14 days

For the general public, no additional precautions are recommended at this time beyond the simple daily precautions that everyone should always take. It is currently flu and respiratory illness season, and flu activity is still high and expected to continue for a number of weeks. Public health officials recommend taking everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs (as detailed above).

For Idaho-specific information about COVID-19, please visit <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/> or EIPH's website at www.EIPH.Idaho.gov.

If you would like to schedule an interview to discuss the information in this release, please contact Mimi Taylor, Public Information Officer, at 208-521-6722.

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