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Stay Safe as COVID-19 Cases Rise + Winter Holiday Guidance

NCDHHS Communications [news@dhhs.nc.gov]

Sent: Friday, December 04, 2020 11:52 AM

To: Steve Johnston

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NC UPDATE

Dec. 4, 2020

Take Precautions to Stay Safe as COVID-19 Metrics Rise

Our COVID-19 metrics are very concerning. Yesterday, we hit another devastating milestone with more than 5,600 new cases reported in just 24 hours. This past Wednesday, we saw our highest rate yet of the percent of tests that were positive, hitting 11.4 percent. Our hospitalization numbers are also setting records with over 2,100 now in the hospital with COVID-19.

COVID-19 has killed more than three times the number of North Carolinians in the past 11 months than the flu did in the past decade. We must keep working together to protect our loved ones, to make sure our hospitals are there for those who need them, and to save lives. If you are with someone you don't live with, wear a mask and keep your distance. Better yet, limit your social interactions as much as possible.

While safe and effective vaccines are on the way, we must continue to use the tools that we know work to slow the spread of COVID-19. That means continuing to practice the 3 Ws – wearing a mask, waiting 6 feet apart and washing hands often – and downloading the SlowCOVIDNC app. Developed by NCDHHS, the exposure notification app alerts users when they may have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Download the app for free on the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#) and [learn more](#) about SlowCOVIDNC.



With the rising COVID-19 trends, NCDHHS strongly recommends avoiding holiday travel and limiting physical contact with people who do not live in your household. But if you choose to travel or gather with people who live outside your household, follow these recommendations.

Get It, Got It, Good: Get Your Flu Vaccination



The CDC recommends flu vaccination every year for everyone 6 months and older. Vaccination is the best way to prevent infection with the flu. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it's more important than ever before to get your flu shot to reduce hospitalizations and prevent co-infections of both COVID-19 and flu.

The flu vaccine is available in nearly every pharmacy, doctor's office, and even curbside. Plus, you can often get it at little to no cost. Don't wait. Get your flu vaccine. Got it? Good. Learn more at flu.nc.gov. To find a flu vaccine near you, visit VaccineFinder.org.

Other COVID-19 News

- Governor Roy Cooper and NCDHHS Secretary, Dr. Mandy Cohen, recently outlined the state's plan to distribute a COVID-19 vaccine once it is authorized for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- Due to rapidly rising COVID-19 cases, North Carolina issued additional safety measures and tightened mask requirements and enforcements through an executive order.
- In an effort to maintain social distance during the COVID-19 pandemic, NCDHHS will issue thousands of automated payments to help people in the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) with winter heating expenses.
- North Carolina launched a new partnership, the NC Education Corps, to bring extra support to K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 Testing

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or may have been exposed to the virus should get tested.

North Carolina has upcoming no-cost community testing events scheduled in **Alamance, Avery, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Cleveland, Cumberland, Davie, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Gaston, Gates, Graham, Greene, Guilford, Halifax, Henderson, Hertford, Hoke, Iredell, Jackson, Johnston, Lenoir, Lincoln, Madison, Martin, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Montgomery, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Pamlico, Person, Pitt, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rockingham, Rutherford, Stanly, Surry, Wake, Washington, Yadkin and Yancey.** For an up-to-date list of events, visit the [Community Testing Events](#) webpage. For more details about a specific event, call ahead before you go for a test.

COVID-19 testing is also provided at some local health departments, doctor and clinician offices, hospitals and clinics, many pharmacy sites and retail outlets, and other community locations. You can find additional testing sites by using the [Find My Testing Place](#) tool online.

Get the Latest Information

- Visit the [NCDHHS COVID-19 Response website](#) for information, a [data dashboard](#), [updates](#), [live briefings](#) and [more](#).
- Go to [North Carolina's COVID-19 Information Hub](#) for resources, information and assistance across state government, including the latest [news releases](#).
- Follow NCDHHS on [social media](#) for advance notice of press briefings and a recap.



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**HEALTH AND
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