



Public Health

Idaho North Central District



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tara Macke

PHONE: (208) 799-3100

DATE: March 2, 2020

HEADLINE: Public Health Advises Use of Good Illness Etiquette for Prevention of Novel Coronavirus

LEWISTON, IDAHO – Public Health – Idaho North Central District (PH-INCD) would like to recognize the recent new cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in western Washington that were acknowledged over the weekend. These cases of the novel coronavirus have occurred in community members of western Washington without “out of country” travel or contact with other known cases, suggesting that this new illness may already be present in some communities.

While there are no known cases in Idaho, it is expected that like other illnesses such as influenza, this illness is likely to continue to spread to new areas including this region. PH-INCD is aware of concern over a local jazz festival held over the weekend as there were students from the State of Washington that attended. There is no indication that the students from Washington had any illness or were considered as risks to other students or participants. Two local schools closed on Monday for the purposes of pre-cautionary cleaning.

The risk of transmission within the general public remains low and there are precautions people can take to minimize their risk of contracting any respiratory illness. It is important for citizens to utilize the same good illness etiquette utilized to protect ourselves from the common cold or influenza. There is no vaccination for this illness, and treatment involves staying well hydrated and seeking medical care if you become significantly ill. Things to remember to keep yourself healthy are:

- Wash your hands often, especially after contact with surfaces touched by others.
- Make sure to not touch your eyes, mouth, or nose with unwashed hands.
- Avoid people who are ill.
- Stay home if you are ill, but contact your medical provider if your illness appears to be more severe than you would normally expect.
- Cover your cough with a tissue, and dispose of your tissue, if you do not have a tissue, cough into your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- If you are ill and need to be seen by your medical provider or be seen in a local medical facility, call ahead to let them know that you are ill, and that you will be seeking medical care. The medical provider can suggest precautions to help reduce the spread of your illness to others at the facility.
- If you have been ill with symptoms including a fever, but are feeling better, please remain at home until your fever has resolved for 24 hours without the use of “fever reducing” medications.

As cases of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continue to increase throughout the world and in the United States, Public Health – Idaho North Central District (PH-INCD) is monitoring the situation and working closely with healthcare partners.

For the latest information on COVID-19 visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> or <http://idahopublichealth.com/district-2/novel-coronavirus>