ADAIR COUNTY COVID-19 CASES NOW AT 222

Kirksville, MO 8/27/2020 – Three residents infected by community spread bring the number of confirmed cases in Adair County since March to 222. The three new cases involve a 39-year-old female, a 29-year-old female, and a 25-year-old male. There are now 31 active cases while 191 have left isolation.

Adair County Health Department staff have made 1,156 calls in contact-tracing efforts. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health officials, contact tracing is paramount to efforts to control the spread of any infectious disease, especially community spread. This is particularly true for COVID-19 due to the number of people who have the disease and are infectious, but because they have no symptoms, they unaware they are transmitting the virus.

Based on the current number of calls and cases in Adair County, for every confirmed case, an average of five other people are called because they have had close contact with that individual and could be infected. In Adair County, some positive cases have had no close contact with anyone while others may identify 10 or so. During the call, staff interview the contact and determine whether to advise that contact to quarantine, be tested, or both. According to Lori Guffey, communicable disease nurse with the Adair County Health Department, staff have advised those 1,156 people contacted to quarantine for 14 days and monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19. Those contacts are advised to call the health department if they begin experiencing any symptoms at which time, the health department may recommend testing.

“We try to be reassuring when we talk to people who have had close contact with people who have tested positive for the virus, not panic them,” said Guffey. “But we have to be firm enough for them to take it seriously if we advise them to quarantine. If they don’t, they risk spreading the disease to even more people, including their own family and friends,” she said.

Quarantine is separating and restricting the movements of people who had close contact with a known infected person to see if they experience symptoms themselves. Isolation separates known infected people from others. Both measures are designed to prevent further transmission of the virus.

People are advised to quarantine for 14 days if they had close contact with a confirmed positive person within the 48-hour period before that person started having symptoms, or if they...
had close contact with an asymptomatic person within the 48-hour-period prior to that person testing positive for the virus. According to the CDC, “close contact” means:

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more;
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19;
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them);
- You shared eating or drinking utensils; or,
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

“We appreciate the cooperation we get from the vast majority of people we call during our contact-tracing efforts,” Guffey said. “That makes our job easier, our calls briefer and, we hope, helps reduce the spread of the virus. After all, that’s the goal, and it takes every one of us to get there,” she said.

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