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Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Media coverage about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is growing in intensity every day. COVID-19 is a new virus that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, which causes respiratory illness with symptoms that range from very mild to severe and may result in death. The CDC believes that the symptoms of coronavirus disease may appear from 2 to 14 days after exposure. The current risk of disease in the United States is low, and there are no confirmed cases in Michigan. In order to strengthen Michigan's preparedness, on Feb. 28, 2020, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer activated the State Emergency Operations Center to help coordinate the state's response to coronavirus threat. There is no vaccine available for coronavirus at this time, but we highly recommend our patients receive a seasonal influenza vaccination. As a precautionary measure, Sault Tribe Health Division ordered face shields, masks and other types of personal protective equipment. The Health Division also added coronavirus screening questions for Medical / Nursing and Walk In Clinic's patients.

What are the similarities between coronavirus and seasonal influenza?

- Symptoms are similar and may include fever, cough, body aches, and fatigue, and both can result in pneumonia.
- Both can be spread person to person through airborne droplets (e.g., an infected person coughing or sneezing).
- Neither disease can be treated with antibiotics, but both diseases may be treated by addressing symptoms (i.e., reducing fever). Severe cases may require hospitalization and support through mechanical ventilation.

How you can protect yourself from getting coronavirus?

The steps you can take to prevent the spread of flu and the common cold will also help prevent coronavirus:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
4. Avoid contact with people who are sick.
5. Stay home if you are sick and contact your Healthcare Provider about your illness.
6. If requested, participate in community mitigation activities (this is especially important for small kids, Elders and patients with compromised immune systems.)

What is community mitigation?

Community mitigation uses a variety of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) to limit the spread of the virus. Community NPIs are policies and strategies such as school closures and early dismissals, postponing of social gatherings and social distancing (telecommuting). Environmental NPIs include routine surface cleaning that helps eliminate the virus from frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as toys, refrigerator handles, desks, and door-knobs in homes; childcare facilities, schools and workplaces; and other settings where people regularly gather.

Has anyone been quarantined?

To date, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has not placed anyone in a quarantine facility because the screening process has not identified any individuals as being at high risk of infection.

Can my healthcare provider test for coronavirus?

Healthcare providers collect the specimen to be tested should an individual meet the testing criteria. The CDC has tested samples from Michigan (all were negative). As of Feb. 27, 2020, the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories can also perform the test.

Where I may get updates on coronavirus disease?

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/coronavirus
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services: michigan.gov/coronavirus