



Panhandle Health District

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Panhandle Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Facing Risks

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Panhandle Health District

As businesses around Idaho begin to open, it is natural to experience some anxiety. We face risks every day that require us to make choices and take action to protect ourselves. When we travel in our vehicles, we wear our seat belt; when we ride our bikes, we wear a helmet; when we raft the river, we wear a lifejacket; when we hike in the mountains, we carry bear spray. Some level of risk is, and will most likely always will be, around us and we have a choice in how we protect ourselves. Many of the ways we are protecting ourselves from COVID-19, will also prevent us from contracting and spreading other viruses.

For COVID-19, it is what we've been practicing now for weeks:

- Wash hands often. Lather up for 20 seconds, rinse, dry with a clean towel.
- Avoid close contact with others (6 feet apart).
- Clean and disinfect regularly.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cover your cough/sneeze.
- Wear a cloth face covering when around others.
- One of the best ways we can protect others is staying home when we are ill.

Watch for symptoms of COVID-19 in yourself and your loved ones. According to the CDC, people with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever

- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Some of you may be experiencing isolation fatigue and are more than ready to leave your home. Do so, but do it cautiously and know what you can do to protect yourself and others.

In Idaho people with severe cases of coronavirus who need hospital care receive the appropriate level of care. Our hospitals provide lifesaving measures like ventilators and ICU care. Other medical emergencies don't stop due to a pandemic. Our healthcare system provides care for whatever healthcare need patients may have. As we advance through Governor Little's reopening stages, we will closely monitor COVID-19 case trends, emergency department visits, hospital surge capacity, and testing capabilities for at-risk healthcare workers as spelled out in the Reopening Idaho criteria. In order to advance to the next stage of the rebound plan these measurable criteria must be met.

Remember to reach out if you need help managing your stress and anxiety. A prolonged event, like COVID-19, can be hard to deal with and not everyone is going to manage it the same way. Focus on reaching one stage of Governor Little's reopening plan at a time. If we all do our part, we will advance to the next stage together.

Kootenai Health and the Panhandle Health District are actively working to share information about COVID-19 with our community. You can find the latest updates and ways to protect yourself at [cdc.gov/covid19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19). If you have questions about COVID-19 or think you may have the virus, call the Panhandle Health District COVID-19 hotline at 1-877-415-5225.

Panhandle Health District provides over 40 different public health programs to families, individuals and organizations in northern Idaho. From food and drinking water safety to health education and disease control, public health services are critical to ensure our community is a safe and healthy place to live, work and play.

The PHD team is made up of nurses, nutritionists, environmental health specialists, health educators and many other dedicated professionals with a common goal to deliver vital public health services.

Panhandle Health District is one of seven health districts in the state of Idaho.

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