

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: April 4, 2020
EVENT: Kenosha County Emergency Management COVID-19 Virus
LOCATION: County of Kenosha

The Kenosha County Joint Information Center is continuing to provide answers to the community's most frequently asked questions about COVID-19.

The Kenosha County Division of Health is accepting questions by email at COVID19@kenoshacounty.org, and those most frequently asked will be answered each week — in a news release from the Joint Information Center and in a video produced by the Kenosha Police Department.

This week's video features Amanda Tuura, public health nurse with the Kenosha County Division of Health, and Kenosha Police Lt. Joseph Nosalik, assistant public information officer for the Joint Information Center.

All of these videos are available on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/KCCCOVIDplaylist> and on the Kenosha County Government Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/kenoshacountygovt.

A written synopsis of the questions and answers follows, beginning with a statement by Nosalik on behalf of law enforcement:

Yes, essential businesses do remain open. However, if you don't have to leave your home, please don't.

Plan ahead. Limit your trips to the grocery store. Select a single member from your family to run the errands that you need for your home. Stay safe, and stay healthy.

Answers to the following questions were provided by Tuura, on behalf of the Division of Health:

Q: How long should a business be shut down for should an employee test positive with COVID-19?

A: Businesses are not required to shut down due to a positive result from an employee. Businesses need to promote social distancing, frequent handwashing and other good hygienic practices, such as coughing or sneezing into your sleeve. Employers need to suggest to employees that if you are not feeling well, you should stay home – EVEN IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE MILD.

Q: Hearing that the president has extended the stay-at-home advisory to 30 days now, is it possible for things to return to normal around May-ish?

A: Unfortunately, the Kenosha County Division of Health is unable to predict the future. Looking at the trend of the COVID-19 virus, the Midwest seems to be about three weeks behind the East Coast. There are many factors that are involved with the spread of the virus. The best practice for all people to continue to follow is social distancing, frequent hand washing and good cough and sneeze hygiene. Most importantly, stay home to avoid contact with other people to help reduce further spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Q: My landlord is planning an inspection for pests in all of their townhouses. Is this legal or safe at this time?

A: According to Emergency Order #12, landlords or rental property managers shall avoid entering leased residential premises unless emergency maintenance is required.

Q: There has been conflicting information about the use of Advil "IF" you contract COVID-19. The answer is continually changing from YES, it's OK to use, to NO don't use it. Is there a definitive answer on this topic? Also, what about plain old aspirin?

A: This warning was initially given for those **diagnosed** with COVID-19. Currently, there is no scientific evidence linking over-the-counter use of ibuprofen to the aggravation of COVID-19. There is no definitive answer, however, and as we learn more about the virus, this may change. As always, use of any medication prescribed or over the counter should be in consultation with your primary care provider.

Q: Is a blood test available in Southeastern Wisconsin to check for antibodies to indicate that someone has already had COVID-19?

A: To the best of our knowledge, the health systems in the Southeastern area of Wisconsin do not have this test available for commercial use

Initial work to develop a serology test for COVID-19 is underway at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the CDC. In order to develop the test, the CDC needs blood samples from people who had COVID-19, at least 21 days after their symptoms first started.

Researchers are currently working to develop the basic parameters for the test, which will be refined as more samples become available. Once the test is developed, the CDC will need additional samples to evaluate whether the test works as intended.

Q: Please address the levels of testing for COVID-19.

A: According to the federal government’s testing guidelines, there are three levels of priority for testing people:

- PRIORITY 1 ensures optimal care options for all hospitalized patients, lessens the risk of healthcare-associated infections, and maintains the integrity of the U.S. healthcare system. Individuals who fall into Priority 1 include:
 - Hospitalized patients
 - Healthcare facility workers with symptoms
- PRIORITY 2 ensures those at highest risk of complication of infection are rapidly identified and appropriately triaged. Testing will be completed on:
 - Patients in long-term care facilities with symptoms
 - Patients 65 years of age and older with symptoms
 - Patients with underlying conditions with symptoms
 - First responders with symptoms
- PRIORITY 3, as resources allow, includes testing of individuals in the surrounding community of rapidly increasing hospital cases to decrease community spread, and ensure health of essential workers. Individuals who fall into Priority 3 include:
 - Critical infrastructure workers with symptoms
 - Individuals who do not meet any of the above categories with symptoms
 - Healthcare facility workers and first responders
 - Individuals with mild symptoms in communities experiencing high numbers of COVID-19 hospitalizations

Q: How true is it that people over 60 are at risk for developing COVID?

A: While it has been well-publicized that older adults and those with underlying health conditions are at greater risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19, it’s important to understand that people of every age are at risk of getting infected with the virus and spreading it to others.

As of April 2, 78 percent of COVID-19 cases in Kenosha County are under age 60, and 28 percent are under 40.

Q: How long does the COVID-19 virus live on surfaces such as cardboard, plastic or other hard surfaces?

A: A National Institutes of Health study found that the virus which causes COVID-19 survives on cardboard up to 24 hours, and up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless-steel surfaces. The findings suggest the virus might last this long on door handles, plastic-coated or laminated worktops and other hard surfaces. The researchers did find, however, that copper surfaces tended to kill the virus in about four hours.

Research has shown that coronaviruses can be inactivated within a minute by disinfecting surfaces with 62-71% alcohol, or 0.5% hydrogen peroxide bleach or household bleach containing 0.1% sodium hypochlorite. (See more information here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>.)

The findings of this study affirm the guidance from public health professionals to use precautions similar to those for influenza and other respiratory viruses to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Recommendations to prevent the spread of the virus include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Q: Would it be possible to post information regarding the locations within the county of those testing positive?

A: There is a new dashboard page available at www.kenoshacounty.org/covid-19. The locations of those testing positive will be added to that page soon, but only by census tract. It will not provide any protected health information that could be deemed identifying.

Joint Information Center disclaimers:

The Joint Information Center will not provide medical diagnoses or legal advice.

If you have a question regarding the welfare of a person you are unable to check on yourself, please contact your local law enforcement agency. The COVID19@kenoshacounty.org email address is not monitored 24/7, and is not intended to replace the traditional request for law enforcement or emergency service.

Those seeking immediate answers to questions regarding COVID-19 are encouraged to dial 2-1-1 or visit the 2-1-1 website, [https:// 211wisconsin.communityos.org](https://211wisconsin.communityos.org).

More information about COVID-19 is also available at:
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/covid-19.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov>
<https://www.kenoshacounty.org/2043/COVID-19-Information-Center>

Together, we can and will slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.