

Big Horn County Public Health

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To All Concerned County Citizens:

Tuesday, March 10, 2020,

As Big Horn County's Health Officer, I wanted to share with you the latest information on the Coronavirus¹ (COVID-19.)

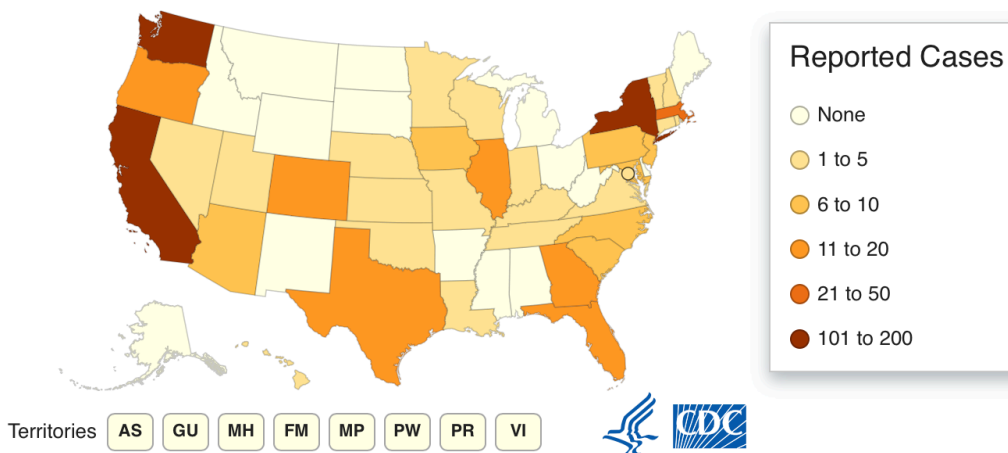
We have NO individuals under investigation for COVID-19 by Big Horn County Public Health.

CDC's Current Risk Assessment:

The CDC reports that as of March 10, the number of confirmed and presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in the US has reached 732 across 36 states and Washington, D.C., and fatalities rose to 26, with most deaths involving residents in Washington state. As of today, there is a lockdown on travel and public events across Italy, Ireland and Israel.^{2 3}

The CDC states: "The potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 is high, both globally and to the United States. But individual risk is dependent on exposure. For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low."

States Reporting Cases of COVID-19 to CDC*



CDC official says many Americans will likely become infected by coronavirus

Dr. Nancy Messonnier, the director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, said that many Americans will likely become infected by the coronavirus and that older Americans with underlying health conditions should be among the most concerned so they should stock up on supplies now. Dr. Messonnier said, "As the trajectory of the outbreak continues, many people in the

¹ Much of this information has been taken directly from CDC Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

² CDC Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html#lab-testing>

³ CNN: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/03/10/world/coronavirus-covid-19-update-intl-hnk/index.html>

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U.S. will at some point in time this year or next be exposed to this virus, and there's a good chance many will become sick. The reason to stock up now is to kind of stick close to home."⁴

The National Institutes of Health is saying 80% of cases will have mild illness, 15-20% will require medical care.

In contrast, influenza has infected as many as 49 Million in the U.S. and killed an estimated 52,000. **We DO have a vaccine for influenza** and this year's vaccine has proven very effective.⁵

Wyoming Risk Assessment

Dr. Alexia Harrist, State Health Officer and State Epidemiologist with Wyoming Department of Health, states, "At the Wyoming Department of Health, we are closely monitoring the situation and sharing our recommendations. **At this time there are no reported cases in Wyoming and the risk to our residents from the disease remains low.** Currently we believe the risk for disease is primarily among travelers to other countries with community transmission. However, it is becoming increasingly likely that COVID-19 will eventually spread to our state."⁶

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that have caused some serious illnesses, but mostly cause the common cold. COVID-19 is new mutation and that has been responsible for how quickly it spreads and lack of immunity in its hosts. There is no available vaccine.

Symptoms

Like the common cold symptoms are common too: Fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms ranged from **mild symptoms to severe illness** and may appear **2-14 days after exposure.**

Preventing Spread & Avoiding Disease

The ways to prevent spread and avoid the disease are common as well:

Like the common cold, the virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

- 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.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

⁴ The Hill, Americans over 60 should avoid crowds. <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/486645-cdc-americans-over-60-should-stock-up-on-supplies-avoid-crowds>

⁵ CDC Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/preliminary-in-season-estimates.htm>

⁶ Wyoming Department of Health Website: <https://health.wyo.gov/wyoming-preparing-as-states-coronavirus-risk-still-low/>

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- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Preparing for COVID-19

While the immediate risk of this virus to the American public is currently low, everyone can do their part to help prepare for this emerging public health threat:

- Practice good health habits that help your immune system work effectively:
- Get appropriate sleep.
- Stay physically active.
- Get an annual flu vaccine.
- Manage stress.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat nutritiously.

What to Do If You Think You Are Sick With COVID-19

- Stay home except to get medical care
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean your hands often
- Wear a facemask
- Avoid sharing personal household items
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

Again, I would like to reiterate, THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR IMMEDIATE ALARM IN THE STATE OF WYOMING AND THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 IS LOW.

Coronavirus information and updates from Wyoming Department of Health can be found at <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/infectious-disease-epidemiology-unit/disease/novel-coronavirus/>. If you are interested in receiving future news releases, you can sign up here: <https://health.wyo.gov/news/>. Pay attention to special travel recommendations from the CDC, which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

Respectfully,

David Weston, Fairbanks, MD, FAAFP
Big Horn County Health Officer
Commissioner, State Emergency Response Commission,
Wyoming Office of Homeland Security