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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

October 30, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DuPage County Residents Are Called to Action to Slow the Spread of COVID-19

DuPage County— Today marks the first week since the Restore Illinois Resurgence Mitigations were imposed on Region 8. During this week, DuPage County residents and community leaders have worked together to face the evolving challenges associated with COVID-19. As the holiday season approaches, residents are reminded of the urgent need to avoid in-person gatherings and crowded places. The actions every individual takes today will directly influence the spread of COVID-19 and the impact the virus will have on our communities in the weeks to come.

“As our communities seek to safely reopen businesses, schools, and other components of our daily lives, we can’t stress enough how important it is for all of us to come together to slow the spread of this virus. This situation is greater than any single one of us, and our individual actions have a direct impact on the health and well-being of our friends, family, and community,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of the DuPage County Health Department. “Our County’s ability to overcome these challenges fully depends on all businesses, parents, and residents doing their part.”

Fortunately, we are not defenseless and have simple and effective public health tools available to help us all slow the spread of COVID-19. Studies and research have shown the simple practice of wearing a mask can greatly reduce the risk of transmission. Wearing a mask helps prevent people with the virus from unknowingly spreading it to others in their community. Therefore, it is recommended that everyone wear a mask to control the spread of the virus. In addition, people should maintain their physical distance from others who are not part of their immediate household, wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer often,

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avoid in-person gatherings—especially indoors, and stay home when they are sick or if they have been in close contact with an infected person. Staying connected virtually with family and friends is encouraged as much as possible to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 can spread from person to person more easily when people are in close proximity of others who do not live in their home, are not wearing masks while talking, laughing, or eating, and in indoor spaces with inadequate ventilation. “This means that when people congregate in indoor settings, such as in a home, bar, gym, or restaurant, with others who are not part of their immediate household, while also not wearing masks, the risk for transmission greatly increases,” Ayala explained. “We must not let our guard down, even when we are around our friends and loved ones.”

Further complicating this problem, data cited by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that up to 40 to 45 percent of people with COVID-19 may never show symptoms but can still spread the virus. A recent article in the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#) shows that more than 50 percent of transmission events in COVID-19 outbreaks involve individuals who are infected but do not experience symptoms.

As local data are analyzed and considered, outbreak data should not be the primary data point used to identify settings where COVID-19 is most likely to be transmitted. In DuPage County, the [Outbreaks by Setting data](#) encompasses less than 15 percent of all the diagnosed COVID-19 cases. Since the virus can spread through airborne transmission, it becomes increasingly challenging to definitively determine the event which led to the infection of an individual. Therefore, the Health Department always emphasizes the importance of practicing preventive measures and avoiding environments where the virus is more likely to spread.

Additional information regarding COVID-19 in DuPage County is available at www.dupagehealth.org/covid19.

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