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Executive Director

May 26, 2022

**For Immediate Release**

## DuPage County Elevated to “High” COVID-19 Community Level

**DuPage County** – As a result of increased COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, DuPage County has been elevated from “Medium” to “High” COVID-19 Community Level according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The higher number of infected persons are beginning to result in small increases in hospitalizations, as they typically follow case activity increases. Per CDC’s [COVID Data Tracker](#), the rate of new COVID-19 hospital admissions per 100,000 population over the last seven days in DuPage County is 10.9, an increase from 4.1 in the past month.

The risk level is considered “high” when a county reports 10 or more new COVID-19 hospital admissions per 100,000 residents in a week, or if COVID-19 patients are occupying more than 10 percent of intensive care unit beds. As of May 26, 2022, DuPage County is reporting 342 new cases per 100,000 residents in the last 7 days.

DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) continues to remind individuals that we have the tools to manage and prevent severe illness related to COVID-19, such as:

- Staying [up to date](#) with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.
- Staying home and [getting tested](#) if you have symptoms.
- Wearing the most protective mask you can that fits well ([such as an N95 or KN95](#)), especially if you have symptoms, a positive test, or been exposed to COVID-19.
- Washing your hands often or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Increasing air flow and maintaining improved ventilation throughout indoor spaces when possible. Spending more time outdoors and in well-ventilated settings.
- Stay in touch with your doctor. Contact your doctor as soon as possible if you are an older adult or have underlying medical conditions. [Possible treatment](#) may be available for you which can reduce your chances of severe illness and death.

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.



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“The continued emergence of new COVID-19 variants that cause more infections and spread faster than the original strain of the virus is driving the transition from “medium” to “high” community level. To protect those who are most vulnerable, we must stay vigilant, following all precautions to protect our community,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of the DuPage County Health Department. “Vaccinations remain the most effective tool to protect individuals from hospitalizations and deaths related to COVID-19.”

If you are at [high risk for severe illness](#), consider taking [additional precautions](#). And if you test positive and you are an [older adult](#) or have an [underlying medical condition](#), contact your healthcare provider right away to evaluate your COVID-19 treatment options. For persons at high risk of severe illness, treatment must be started within days after you first develop symptoms to be effective. More information and resources are available at [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19).

Additionally, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), authorized a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster dose for children aged 5 – 11 years.

DuPage County continues to be a leader in vaccination rates, with 77 percent of residents fully vaccinated. However, there is more work to be done. Continuing to expand vaccine coverage and ensuring all eligible people are up to date with vaccination is essential, especially since COVID-19 cases continue to remain especially high among youth aged 5-14 years.

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, in DuPage County:

- 51 percent of children aged 5-11 years have completed a primary series of the COVID-19 vaccination and 54 percent have received one dose.
- 75 percent of children aged 12-17 years have completed a primary series of the COVID-19 vaccination and 79 percent have received one dose.

Parents are highly encouraged to visit [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov) to find a vaccine provider nearest them and schedule a booster appointment for their child. DCHD plans to offer COVID-19 vaccine boosters to children aged 5 – 11 years in the coming days once final recommendations from CDC are adopted. Details on how to schedule appointments will be posted at [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine).

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