

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

Dear Community Members:

This week marked the anniversary of the first COVID-19 vaccine administered in Ohio and week 52 of continual COVID-19 vaccine clinics by dedicated Medina County Health Department staff and volunteers.

Despite those milestones, we continue to battle through new waves of the pandemic. Right now it feels more like a tidal wave! Heading into time of year where families and co-workers celebrate together, I want to reinforce the tools and information available as you make your holiday plans. It remains important to gather safely this season.



### Status of COVID-19 in Medina County

The Health Department is receiving approximately 150 new COVID-19 cases per day. A large percentage of these individuals are unvaccinated. Medina County's 14-day moving average today is at 1,135 cases per 100,000 residents, more than ten times the CDC's threshold for what's considered high incidence. That data is inclusive of PCR lab testing results, proctored home test kits, and individuals who tested at home and called us to report their positive result. This data does not include un-proctored at home-tests that someone may have taken on their own. This means the number we are reporting is an undercount of actual illness.

Our region this week was at 90 percent capacity for critical care beds. COVID-19 hospitalizations have almost doubled in the last three weeks. What's most troubling about limited hospital capacity is that the emergency rooms and critical beds available for COVID-19 patients are the same beds needed for accidents, surgeries, and other medical emergencies. Our hospital partners are reporting that the majority of individuals hospitalized are also unvaccinated.

### When to Test

There is a resource page on our website with testing options <https://medinahealth.org/community/current-outbreaks/testing/> All local pharmacies are also offering over the counter at-home test kits for purchase, some are online and others are readily available on the shelf. The state is providing free home test kits directly to participating library locations for distribution. With the amount of illness circulating, those kits have been in short supply at times. Please be patient as the state works to replenish those inventories. The Health Department has test kits for use with outbreaks, but not for individual distribution.

If you test positive, we ask that you use the online reporting provided by the test manufacturer. If you are using a test without that feature, or you do not have access to a computer or cell phone, simply call your result to the Health Department 330-723-9688 option 2. Otherwise, we have no way of estimating the level of illness in our community.

Regardless of vaccination status, if you are experiencing symptoms you should stay away from others and seek testing.

Vaccinated and exposed to someone with COVID-19:

- Wear a mask in public settings and monitor for symptoms
- Test 5-7 days after exposure or if symptoms begin

Unvaccinated and exposed to someone with COVID-19:

- Begin quarantine and test right away
- If initial test is negative, continue to stay in quarantine while monitoring symptoms and test again in 5-7 days

### What's Next?

My wish is that you and your family have a healthy and joyous holiday. The Health Department remains committed to providing you with resources, information, and vaccination options. I encourage you to use these websites or reach out if you have any questions: [Health Department](#), [ODH](#), or the [CDC](#).