

COVID On the Rise!!

COVID is on the rise in our area. As of early to mid-August, it is estimated that COVID-19 infections are growing or likely growing in 43 states, including North Carolina.

We want to make you aware of the symptoms being noticed and what to watch for with this current strain of COVID. The common symptoms include:

- Nasal congestion or a runny nose
- Fatigue and low energy
- Headache
- Dry or mild cough
- Muscle and body aches
- Low-grade fever or chills
- Sneezing

Loss of taste or smell is less common than earlier COVID but may still occur. Many symptoms overlap with flu and allergies, which make testing especially important.

Consider COVID testing if you:

- Experience cold- or flu-like symptoms.
- Have been in close contact with someone who tested positive.
- Are attending large gatherings or traveling.
- Live with or care for someone at high risk.

Most at-home rapid tests can detect the current COVID variant. However, if your first test is negative but symptoms persist, repeat testing after 24–48 hours is recommended.

If you test positive:

- **Stay home and away from others if you have respiratory symptoms.**
- Isolate until free of any fever for 24 hours without using any fever reducing medicine.
- Resume routine activities wearing a mask for the next five (5) days as an extra precaution.

Most mild cases improve with:

- Rest and hydration.
- Fever reducers such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil).
- Use of decongestants for congestion (consult with your healthcare provider if you have any chronic illness like high blood pressure).
- Throat lozenges for sore throat.

High-risk patients may be eligible for antiviral medications such as Paxlovid when prescribed early in the course of infection. A healthcare provider can determine whether this treatment is appropriate based on medical history and current symptoms.

If you have further questions or worsening of symptoms (develop shortness of breath, or have any chronic health conditions [heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, pregnancy, immunocompromised]), notify your healthcare provider for appropriate management.

Source: Center for Disease Control & Prevention (summarized)