

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2021

Delta Variant

The Delta Variant is present and circulating in Marshall County. We are seeing a sharp increase in ill individuals, and the test site is also seeing an increase in the number of people tested. Because of these factors, we are asking Marshall County residents to be vigilant and protect themselves and others from this current wave of Delta COVID 19 virus. This variant of the coronavirus is different. It spreads easily among unvaccinated people and puts individuals at increased risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and possible death.

With this variant we are also seeing a small percentage of vaccinated individuals that are getting sick and can spread the infection. Because of this data, guidance must change to reflect best practices and to keep communities safe. Therefore, the CDC is now recommending masks for all while indoors.

The CDC has deemed Marshall County RED and in a high area of spread of the Delta COVID 19 variant. Currently, ISDH advisory level for Marshall County is YELLOW. The difference in these two alerts is a result of the dates the data was pulled and advisory given.

As a community we can not ignore that the virus has and is producing another wave of illness here in Marshall County, as well as the State of Indiana. Because of this, Dr. Byron Holm MD, Marshall County Health Officer is **strongly recommending** the community adhere to the following guidance:

MASKING: The Marshall County Health Department strongly recommends that masks return for all. Our elderly population, children under the age of 12 and our immunocompromised community members are extremely vulnerable to the Delta variant. For those who have been fully vaccinated, we ask you to:

- Wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission.
- Wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease or not fully vaccinated.
- If you have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to be tested 3-5 days after exposure, and to wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. PCR test is recommended for those who are fully vaccinated, close contacts.

- Recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status.

VACCINATION: We are concerned about areas of our community with very low vaccination rates. Please consider vaccination as a means of protecting yourself and others. The vaccination is safe and effective at reducing disease, death, and hospitalization. You can find up-to-date videos regarding vaccination myths on the Health Department Facebook page and website. Please visit, <https://vaccine.coronavirus.in.gov/> to schedule your vaccination.

QUARANTINE FOR SCHOOLS: For all unvaccinated students, teachers, and staff who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. Close contacts, identified through contact tracing, should quarantine unless they are fully vaccinated, or have tested positive in the last 3 months, and do not have any symptoms.

- Students, teachers, and staff who are in quarantine should stay home and follow the direction of their school district about when it is safe for them to be around others.

- All fully vaccinated individuals who remain asymptomatic (even if a close contact) do not need to quarantine but should monitor for symptoms throughout the 14 days following their exposure.

QUARANTINE FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC: For all unvaccinated public who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. Close contacts, identified through contact tracing, should quarantine unless they are fully vaccinated, or have tested positive in the last 3 months, and do not have any symptoms.

Local COVID 19 Vaccination Opportunities: Marshall County Health Department is having COVID 19 vaccination clinic each Monday from 9am-12 noon and 1:30-3pm. Individuals can go online to make an appointment at ourshot.in.gov. MCHD also accepts walk-ins on Mondays for the COVID 19 vaccine. Currently, MCHD has the following vaccines available: Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson and Johnson.

Local COVID 19 Testing Opportunities: Marshall County Health Department COVID 19 Test site is located at LIFEPLEX. The address is: 2855 Miller Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563. Hours of testing are: Monday 12 noon- 6pm and Tuesday thru Friday 8 am-4pm.

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Dr. Byron Holm MD

Marshall County Health Officer