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Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Daily Update

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is encouraging all our residents to practice social distancing and only leaving home when necessary with growing evidence of community spread (new COVID cases popping up with no history of domestic or international travel).

With community spread, a shortage of COVID-19 tests, and individuals who are considered contagious 48 hours before they have symptoms, residents should assume that they are at risk whenever they leave the house and are in a public space.

The only time the health department will alert the public to specific locations where an individual who has tested positive has been when the contact-tracing team are unable to contact all of the individuals who may have been present (for example: larger facilities). As such, we want to make the public aware of an area that may have allowed for exposure, therefore making individual identification difficult. Individuals who were present at the Petoskey Meijer (1201 Lears Road, Petoskey) on March 21st from 1:30 – 10:00pm and March 22nd from 1:30 – 10:00pm may have been minimally exposed to COVID-19.

While we know this news is unnerving for many individuals, it is why we continue to urge residents to **stay home** and **stay safe** and to:

- only leave home for essential needs and as infrequently as possible,
- limit the number of individuals who leave your home (designate one person to get groceries, pick up medicine),
- stay at least 6 feet away and avoid gatherings, if you must go out,
- when recreating outdoors, maintain social distancing and do not congregate,
- wash your hands frequently for at least twenty seconds,
- avoid touching your face,
- disinfect commonly touched surfaces,
- check on others – by calling loved ones and neighbors who are most at risk to see how they are doing and if they need help.

“We cannot over-emphasize the importance of compliance with the Stay Home, Stay Safe order,” remarked Lisa Peacock, Health Officer at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. “We want to stress that this is an order, *not a suggestion*, aimed at protecting the public’s health. The rise in cases and ongoing community spread in Otsego County as well as the first death of a resident in our region yesterday reminds us it is imperative that we follow this order and NOT leave home. Essential businesses should be screening their employees and implementing social distancing measures as described in the toolkit we provided two days ago.”

As of 4:00pm, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is reporting positive COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim – 4; Charlevoix – 5; Emmet – 6; Otsego – 19. The State of Michigan has reported 9,334 cases and 337 deaths.

Stay up-to-date on the latest information in the Health Department jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting [our website](#).

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

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