



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

ELIZABETH HERTEL
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2022

CONTACT: Chelsea Wuth
517-241-2112
WuthC@michigan.gov

MDHHS reminds Michigan residents to test, get vaccinated and boosted as COVID-19 cases expected to rise through May

Michiganders urged to have a COVID-19 plan: test, mask, talk to your doctor ahead of time

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is reminding Michiganders to participate in best practices to reduce risks of COVID-19 and prevent spread at spring gatherings including proms, graduations, and other holidays and to make sure they are [up-to-date on vaccines](#).

The BA.2 subvariant of Omicron is expected to continue causing a rise in COVID-19 cases in the upcoming weeks; southeast Michigan is already seeing an increase in cases. The increase is not unexpected as the BA.2 subvariant of Omicron has shown to be more transmissible.

“While we wish we could avoid these types of increases in cases, the good news is we have excellent, effective tools to travel safely and gather with loved ones and prevent severe outcomes from COVID-19,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, MDHHS chief medical executive. “We encourage Michigan residents to [make a COVID-19 plan](#): have masks and over-the-counter tests on hand, speak to your physician ahead of time to find out if you qualify for treatments if you are infected and make sure you are up-to-date on vaccines. We recommend Michiganders test if they have symptoms or if they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, and stay home if they are ill.”

While cases may increase, hospitalizations and mortality are not expected to rise significantly, given levels of vaccination, boosters and immunity from the recent Omicron spike. Michigan’s residents are encouraged to be aware of the increased transmission as they go about their daily lives and make personal decisions on masking and other strategies to protect themselves from COVID-19. Michigan remains in the post-surge [recovery phase](#); however, public health officials continue to monitor the situation closely and will notify the public if anything changes.

In addition to testing before and after travel, MDHHS encourages residents to test ahead of group celebrations and gatherings, especially when events may include family and friends who have increased vulnerability to COVID-19 infection. A feature on the [COVID-19 test finder](#) lists wait times for many testing sites across the state, and many options exist for free at-home testing.

Free over-the-counter tests remain available to households through [federal, MI Backpack Home Testing](#), many [Michigan libraries](#) and [Rockefeller programs](#). Continued testing supports early identification of cases in Michigan's communities and helps limit spread of the virus. If you [test positive for COVID-19](#) isolate immediately, avoid travel and gatherings and seek medical care if needed.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers [travel tips](#) – including recommendations of when and where to mask and best practices to avoid illness when traveling.

MDHHS continues to recommend the use of layered mitigation strategies for Michiganders:

- **Get vaccinated against COVID-19.** Michiganders should get up to date on their COVID-19 vaccine. Learn more about vaccines and [when you're up to date](#) at [Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine](#).
- **Learn about therapeutics.** Individuals are encouraged to talk to their doctor about whether they meet eligibility criteria and should get antibody or antiviral treatment if they test positive for COVID-19. Learn more about [COVID-19 Therapeutics](#).
- **Isolate and quarantine if needed.** Staying away from others when you are sick or were recently exposed to COVID-19 are important tools to preventing further spread of the virus. Learn more about [what happens when you have or are exposed to COVID-19](#)
- **Get tested if you are exposed or have symptoms.** Anyone with signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should get tested regardless of vaccination status or prior infection. If you get tested because you have symptoms or were potentially exposed to the virus, you should stay away from others while you wait for the test result. Find a test site at [Michigan.gov/COVIDTest](#).
- **Take additional steps to protect yourself and others.** Protect yourself from COVID-19 by understanding levels of risk, practicing good hygiene and hand washing, staying home when sick and staying up to date with vaccinations. [Know your risk](#); know that others may have a risk different from yours. Respect the choice. For additional guidance on mitigation strategies see [How to Protect Yourself and Others](#).
- **Get a free mask.** Free KN95 masks are being distributed by community organizations, including local MDHHS offices, health departments and Area Agency on Aging offices. Residents who want masks can obtain masks from partner agencies across the state. Michiganders are asked to refer to partner websites or social media sites to find out about mask availability as opposed to calling sites.

For more information on COVID-19, visit [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](#).

###