



**Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 23, 2020**

Current COVID-19 case count

Scott County – Total of 1,389

Total deaths in Scott County: 11

Rock Island County – 70 new cases since Monday; total of 1,429

Currently in hospital: 18

Total deaths in Rock Island County: 30

Total Tyson cases: 164; Tyson deaths: 2

Today's call

A video recording of today's media briefing can be found at

<https://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/covid19/news>

Case resurgence concerning

Remarks from Edward Rivers, director of the Scott County Health Department

Iowa Masonic Care Facility, in coordination with the Scott County Health Department and Iowa Department of Public Health, have identified a total of 14 cases of COVID-19 in residents and staff at their long-term care facility in Scott County.

According to the Iowa Department of Public Health, an outbreak occurs when three or more cases of COVID-19 are identified among residents of a facility.

No deaths are associated with this outbreak at this time.

The facility has notified residents and their families, and consistent with IDPH guidelines, the affected residents are in isolation. Iowa Masonic staff are working closely with Scott County Health Department to protect the health of all residents and staff.

COVID-19 spreads easily and rapidly in settings where people live close together. Older adults and those with underlying chronic medical conditions are at increased risk of severe complications due to COVID-19 infection.

As we have been stressing, the additional cases of COVID-19 in our community increase the risk of the virus spreading to members of our community that are most vulnerable and at increased risk.

Everyone should wash hands often, practice physical distancing by maintaining 6 feet between yourself and others, and wear a cloth face covering when physical distancing is not possible, and stay home when you are sick.

How to properly wear a face covering

Remarks from Janet Hill, chief operating officer of the Rock Island County Health Department

I've been seeing more people incorrectly wearing their face coverings when I've made my weekly grocery and household supply run. Here are tips to wear your face covering properly:

Face covering dos

- Do wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- Do put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Do try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Do make sure you can breathe easily

Face covering don'ts

- Don't put the face covering around your neck or up on your forehead
- Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer to disinfect

How to properly take off face covering when you're home

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer
- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together
- Place covering in the washing machine every day
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing.

Other tips

- Remember my face covering protects you and your face covering protects me
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds each time
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- Remember that wearing a face covering is an act of kindness. It helps protect not only your loved ones but our entire community.

Risk factors make COVID-19 infections worse

Remarks from Dr. Cheryl True, physician, True Lifestyle Medicine Clinic, LLC and medical director, Rock Island County Health Department

Every three years, our community gets a snapshot of the health of the Quad Cities. We last did this in 2018 and have our next one coming up in 2021. When the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 was first starting to circulate, and the demographics of those who were more severely affected were starting to be recognized, I was worried about what would happen in our community. The risk factors emerged first were older had high blood pressure, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. As the world experienced more cases, other risk factors were added such as obesity, chronic kidney disease, COPD, immunocompromised states and sickle cell disease.

And, at the beginning of all of this, we heard cautionary timelines for 12-18 months of vigilance, as we would be continuously expanding our knowledge about this novel virus, discovering effective treatments, and developing a vaccine. But first, we had to get through those early months, where there was a lot of stress, confusion and fear. Our messages were about protecting yourself and others — practice good hand hygiene, stay at least 6 feet from others, avoid gatherings, and the addition of wearing a face covering to protect each other — have been standard.

It's now July, 8 months into this global pandemic, and we know a lot more about this virus, the effects it can have on the human body, and a very small glimpse of what lingering consequences may arise. We don't know the long term outcomes yet, and may not for many years; time will tell what SARS-CoV-2 has in store for us.

We know the standard messaging is out there, and it is being heard! I'd like to add a perspective that we can use to approach the months ahead.

The chronic conditions that may increase risk for severe COVID-19 symptoms are very present in our community and our country. Some would say we have an epidemic of diabetes, cardiovascular disease (our No. 1 killer!), high blood pressure, and obesity. We know the root causes of these are very similar, and they are fueled by our lifestyle choices — what we eat, how active we are, the substances we may choose such as nicotine, alcohol or drugs, how we sleep, how we manage our stress, and how we relate to one another.

In terms of lifestyle choices, there is very strong evidence that four things can make a big difference in preventing and managing those chronic conditions.

- Don't smoke
- Maintain or achieve a BMI of less than 30
- Eat a healthy diet
- Be physically active¹

So, in addition to the current precautions we are taking, what else can we do to reduce our risk during the pandemic? Obviously, we can't change our age — but we can change our choices, and reduce our risk of having a chronic condition. And as a side benefit, not only will we potentially reduce the risk of experiencing severe disease with a COVID infection, we could also reduce our risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes and its complications, chronic kidney disease

and more. We can look at this as self-care, but we can extend this to our families and communities, too!

These health-promoting habits are helpful across the lifespan. By starting with our kids and going all the way to our older adults, we can find ways to adjust and adopt healthier choices. Just note: lifestyle change can be a powerful tool. If you are on medications or have chronic conditions, please check with your health care provider if you are making changes. You may need to have medications adjusted as your conditions improve!

One other point to make is that the things that are good for our physical health can benefit our mental and emotional well-being, too.

Let's focus on three areas:

- If you use tobacco products, please quit — on your own or with assistance from a tobacco-cessation program.
- Be more active. We may be embracing this one — I've seen many more of you out there on our local trails! You don't have to become a runner to benefit here. Being active can be related to planned exercise, but it can also include routine activities that you can do at home. Ideas include going for several short walks throughout the day, gardening, vacuuming, playing with your kids, grandkids or pets, And if you can, find areas that you can safely be outdoors, being in the fresh air and sunshine provides a mental boost, along with increasing your Vitamin D. Indoors or out, 30 minutes of activity daily can boost physical health, and mental health, too.
- Dietary choices. This is the area that can really make an impact. While we have been eating at home more, people have been experimenting with new recipes. Find ways to add whole foods, foods as grown into your diet. Fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, whole grains, beans/legumes, nuts and seeds play an important role in our health, and we don't often get enough of them when we eat a standard American diet. Those big three — diabetes, high-blood pressure and cardiovascular disease — all benefit when we improve our diet.

These foods are rich in phytonutrients and fiber, and are important for our healthy gut flora/microbiome. Paying more attention to adding these healthy items in can benefit our health dramatically; this doesn't have to break your budget either. There are ways to even reduce food costs while eating healthier:

- Adding in fruits and vegetables can be easy this time of year with abundant produce available, and with the Double Up SNAP bucks in Iowa, you can get even more for your money. WIC clients in Illinois can get \$20 in vouchers to use at participating vendors. You can use frozen or canned produce if you don't have access to fresh.
- We can see a very quick response to health conditions with adding these important items into our diets — especially reductions in blood sugars and blood pressure.
- Use herbs and spices to flavor your dishes — they add to the health benefits, and may even reduce use of the salt shaker!

These are just a few tips to get you started thinking about a longer-term approach to the pandemic. There are many local and online resources to help achieve these changes. If it seems overwhelming on top of all the other things we have been doing, it's OK to pick just one thing. Start where you have the most interest — maybe it is a 5 minute walk at lunch or maybe it's adding a fruit to your breakfast and a vegetable at lunch. One of the best parts of changing lifestyle choices is that the benefits can quickly add up, and you can start seeing results right away. I'll see you in the produce section or out on the trails!

Other helpful links:

- 2018 Quad Cities Community Health Assessment: <http://quadcities.healthforecast.net/FINAL%20DRAFT%20-%202018%20Community%20Health%20Assessment%20%20Report%20-%20Quad%20Cities%20Area.pdf>
- Be Healthy QC: <https://www.qchealthinitiative.org/qchi/community-projects/be-healthy-qc/>
- Quad City Health Initiative: <https://www.qchealthinitiative.org/qchi/>
- Quad Cities Behavioral Health Coalition: <https://www.facebook.com/QCBHC/>
- Iowa Healthiest State Initiative: <http://www.iowahealthieststate.com/>
- TobaccoFree QC: <https://www.qchealthinitiative.org/qchi/community-projects/tobacco-free-quad-cities/>
- Healthy Eating on a Budget: <https://extension.illinois.edu/events/2019-11-07-healthy-eating-budget>
- QCTrails: <https://www.qctrails.org/>
- Nutrition Facts: www.NutritionFacts.org
- American College of Lifestyle Medicine: www.LifestyleMedicine.org

¹Study citation: Ford ES, Bergmann MM, Kröger J, Schienkiewitz A, Weikert C, Boeing H. Healthy living is the best revenge: findings from the European Prospective Investigation Into Cancer and Nutrition-Potsdam study. Arch Intern Med. 2009;169(15):1355-1362. doi:10.1001/archinternmed.2009.237

More information

- www.TogetherQC.com
- coronavirus.iowa.gov
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/facilities/Pages/Covid19Response.aspx>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/long-term-care-facility-outbreaks-covid-19>

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