

KITTITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
VIDEO UPDATE
Wednesday, February 17, 2021

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Today's video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ozS3BaUtsU

KCPHD channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyQzBwJLbkLj7WueKJ5w7mQ/>

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Good afternoon, it's Dr. Larson talking about COVID-19.

As you know, as of Valentine's Day (Feb. 14) we went into Phase 2 of the Roadmap to Recovery. School sports can start happening, businesses can open more, restaurants can open to in-person dining, etc.

We're still required to mask and maintain 6' physical distance. There is no Phase 3 yet, but there will be at some point. We have to work with our South Central Region partners (Yakima, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, and Columbia counties) to move forward as a group.

Our numbers are really quite good. Our incident rate is coming down into the low 100's. In December we were at about 600 cases per 100,000 for 14 days. The county is getting 1-2 new cases daily, and Central Washington University continues to have new cases.

Some of our cases have been related to youth sports and some to folks getting together for Super Bowl parties. If you attended a Super Bowl party with someone not from your immediate family, consider yourself exposed and please get tested.

The other thing to talk about is the B117 variant. We are seeing more of that variant, found initially in the United Kingdom. We have 25 cases in the Washington state so far. That is not a study looking at all of the cases, just certain ones that fell out during the testing. So we know we have a lot more than that. It appears to be more infectious and virulent (more severe), so we're encouraging people to mask and social distance.

That leads right into vaccination. We are currently in B1, which is folks older than 65 and folks who are 50+ and live in multi-generational households. We still have appointments available

tomorrow, Friday, and going forward. If you know anyone who meets this criteria, please encourage them to reach out to Public Health, or go on the website to sign up to get the vaccine. The more people we can get vaccinated, the less disease we have, and the sooner we can move forward to what we'd consider a more normal life.

There haven't been any long-term side effects for the vaccination. There have been a few cases of severe allergic reactions, although we haven't had anything like that in Washington state or Kittitas County.

If you have vaccine hesitancy, think about what you are trying to do. If you want your favorite restaurant to be open more, to help the health care workers not be overwhelmed, to visit relatives in the nursing home, and the schools open more, please get vaccinated.

Reach out to your neighbors, help them get signed up, and take good care of yourself.

Thanks a lot. See you next week.

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Transcription provided by:
DARLA HILL SAUTTER
509-312-9339 or words@middledee.com

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