

KITTITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH  
VIDEO UPDATE  
Tuesday, June 1, 2021

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Today's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bd8FyxaQmgs>

KCPHD channel:

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

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

I will mostly talk about masking today, but also about the incident rate as well.

The numbers are continuing to come down. We've been in the single digit positives for most of the last two weeks. We're almost at an incident rate of 200, which is where we would have needed to be for Phase 3 if only going by incident rate. So that's reassuring; things are getting better with the numbers coming down in regard to our county's cases of COVID-19.

We continue to have people hospitalized almost every single day. These people are people who have chosen to not be vaccinated for COVID-19. Almost every single day a new person is hospitalized.

These people have been really sick and tend to be younger. Most of the older people have chosen to have vaccinated. They are staying in the hospital for a shorter time because we're doing a better job of taking care of people with COVID-19, but we have had to shift some people who are so sick that we can't take care of them to other hospitals.

Make sure to think about your questions and concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine. If you get vaccinated, you and/or your relatives are not going to end up in the hospital with COVID-19.

Give that some thought. Call the Health Department to ask questions. Send us e-mails. We're happy to answer your questions.

We continue to do vaccine clinics. I am doing one this coming Saturday at the Farmer's Market. That should be really fun. I'm doing that with a couple of people from the Incident Management Team. That will be really good.

Numbers at CWU continue to go down as the students finish their year and are leaving until the fall.

Over 50% of our population that can be vaccinated (those older than 12) have been. That's pretty good for our county.

Let's talking about masking.

People who have been vaccinated do not have to wear their mask indoors or outdoors. That's the simple part to that.

More difficult is the fact that each business can choose to protect their employees by asking their customers to mask. You could see a sign that says "Masks are still required in this business." Please respect those. They are trying to protect their employees.

Otherwise, those of us that have been vaccinated don't have to wear a mask indoors or outdoors.

The Department of Labor and Industry just came out with some guidance for businesses. Businesses need to document which of their employees are vaccinated and which are not. Vaccinated employees don't have to wear their masks, whereas unvaccinated employees do. That could change over the summer, but that is where we currently are.

My recommendation, because we still have a lot of COVID-19 in Kittitas County, is that if you're uncertain as to the status of people around you, consider wearing your mask. I went to the Farmer's Market last Saturday. I am totally vaccinated. There were a lot of people wearing masks, as did I -- to protect others and myself. Although its' really good, the COVID vaccine is not 100%. After 18 months, I really don't want to get COVID-19.

Schools still have the requirement for masking. If you're watching baseball or track at a school this spring, please wear a mask. The students themselves have to wear masks, and so should you when on the school campus. If you go to the hospital or to a clinic, you still need to wear a mask, as do the employees there.

I apologize for the confusion, but the simple solution is that if you're vaccinated, you don't have to wear a mask in most situations. But if you're an employee at a business, you will probably have to show a document to your employer that you're vaccinated.

Things are good. I'm happy summer is here and people are outside. Being outside is safer.

Please consider getting vaccinated. Instead of waiting until June 30 to fully open up, we might be able to do so sooner.

Thanks a lot. Take care. Be well.

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