

KITTITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
VIDEO UPDATE
Tuesday, April 13, 2021

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Today's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nR8inVcqQ0U>

KCPHD channel:

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

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Good afternoon, it's Dr. Larson talking about COVID-19. I will talk about a few things today: The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, where we are in the phases, and the public meeting happening on Thursday.

We'll start with the public meeting on Thursday. We need to talk about issues in regard to COVID-19. Look at the press releases on the Public Health web page to find a link to the meeting on Thursday this week. There will be a question and answer period, with people from a variety of industries talking about public health and COVID-19.

I want to talk about the Johnson & Johnson vaccine next. Every vaccine has risks and benefits. We were set to give 300 Johnson & Johnson vaccines at Central Washington University today. Early this morning, before it was light here in Washington state, the FDA said that there have been six cases (out of 6.8 million doses given) of women between the ages of 18 and 48 who have developed low platelets and blood clotting after receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

That was enough for the FDA to put a pause on the vaccine. That is how the system is supposed to work, catching things that are potentially the fault of a vaccine or medication, so the system did work as it's supposed to work.

We saw that information this morning, and paused the CWU Johnson & Johnson vaccine clinic that was scheduled. We rolled it over to using the Moderna vaccine (we still have Moderna available at the hospital), and held the clinic. We had some walk ins and others who qualified. We gave 265 doses of the Moderna vaccine at CWU today.

That was their first vaccination clinic and they did a great job because they were organized and professional. People were happy and satisfied with the product they got. So a big shout out to

Central. They were managed by the Kittitas County Incident Management team, as well as the folks from Kittitas Valley Hospital.

They will be having another clinic next Thursday, and they'll be a good partner for us.

Again, we're halting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine for the time being. We did have a Johnson & Johnson clinic at the fairgrounds last Saturday, as well as at a few pharmacies in town. If you received a Johnson & Johnson vaccine, please be on the watch for symptoms. It's not a reason to panic or be overly concerned. The vaccine responses mentioned above came between three and six weeks after the vaccination was given. Watch for severe headache, shortness of breath, chest pain, abdominal pain, and/or leg pain, which indicates clotting.

Again, if you have gotten the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and you get any of these symptoms, be seen by your provider or at the Emergency Room to get a CBC. All the reactions were associated with low platelet count and clotting. There's more to come regarding this.

There is a meeting tomorrow with the American College of Immunization Practices that I will attend, and we'll decide what to do.

Johnson & Johnson is a very different vaccine from the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is an adenovirus vaccine, whereas the other two are mRNA vaccines. There is *no* connection with the mRNA vaccines and the clotting issues.

Again, CWU did a great job today with students, faculty, and staff coming in for the vaccine.

Moving forward, my ask is that people continue to be vaccinated. This is a real disease. We're seeing significant increases in our numbers. The way to get out of this, and to battle against viral variants, is to get enough people vaccinated. To get back to normal this summer and fall, to have the Fair and the Rodeo, to have school back in session fully, we need to be vaccinated.

The other thing to think about is just because we're in Phase 3, it doesn't mean it's a free for all. We need to be masking, social distancing, washing our hands, and protecting others as well as ourselves. Just because we can get together with large

groups of people at this time, it's important to ask if we really need to be doing that right now. Do we need to sell hot dogs at a baseball game this year, for example, or can we wait until next year? We really want to have graduation this year. We want to get kids in grades 6-12 back in school.

Our numbers are still high. I am hopeful, but they are high. Our incident rate is 270.6. Someone asked me if that's good enough for Kittitas County and it's not. We'd like that number to be fewer than 200 cases, and then we could have grades 6-12 back in school fully. To reach that number, we need to mask, social distance, wash hands, and get vaccinated. These are the important things. And really, this is only for three to six more weeks, getting through this.

We didn't get rolled back to Phase 2, which surprised me. We didn't roll back because the Governor changed and said we only needed to meet one of the metrics, but that doesn't really make us any safer. We could still roll back. And the County can also roll us back. For example, we could roll back the spectator part of sports, and we can encourage people to mask in their businesses.

Do your part. I'm hopeful. I'm glad we didn't roll back to Phase 2. But not having had a car accident doesn't mean we shouldn't wear our seatbelts. Please wear your seatbelts.

Wear a mask, wash your hands, socially distance, and be vaccinated. Be safe and be kind. Thanks a lot.

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Transcription provided by:
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