



Press Release

Release Date: 4/7/2020

Contact: Holly Kerns or Ashley McClay at (541) 523-0014 or pio@bakercounty.org

Local Testing for COVID-19

Dr. Eric Lamb, Baker County's Public Health Officer, shares this important message about COVID-19:

Fellow Residents of Baker County:

At this time we still do not have any lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Baker County. There are certainly people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection, but we are still seeing Influenza, Parainfluenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus, Metapneumovirus and other viral respiratory illnesses. For influenza, we have some antiviral medications that can help fight the illness, for the rest, we do not have any treatment.

In many ways, COVID-19 is very similar to these other viruses. For most of us, these viruses cause a cough, fever and runny nose for several days, and we recover fully. For our elderly population and those with underlying medical problems, they can be deadly.

In the coming weeks we will undoubtedly see COVID-19 in our county. To help slow the spread of the virus and keep our most vulnerable residents from getting the virus, please continue to follow Social Distancing Practices and good hand hygiene.

If you become sick with a fever or cough, isolate yourself at home to help prevent spread of the illness, just like you would with other viral illnesses.

For accurate information, please reference the CDC or Oregon Health Authority websites. The CDC website can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>. Oregon Health Authority website at <https://www.oregon.gov/oha>.

Stay healthy, don't touch your face, and please wash your hands!

Eric Lamb, M.D.

Nancy Staten, Baker County Health Department Director, emphasizes that tests for COVID-19 continue to be given locally through primary care providers for patients meeting the guidelines for testing established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Oregon Health Authority:

Persons in the following groups **with fever (100.4°F), cough, or shortness of breath:**

- a. Healthcare workers and first responders (EMS, public safety workers)
- b. Patients with worsening symptoms
- c. Patients 60 years of age or older
- d. Patients with underlying medical conditions, including, but not limited to hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, lung disease, and immunocompromising conditions
- e. People who live in assisted living or are incarcerated or are living in another long term residential facility
- f. Pregnant women
- g. Patients who had contact with a suspect or lab-confirmed COVID-19 patient within 14 days of their symptom onset

Depending upon when a test is performed and which lab the test is sent to, it takes an average of 7 days to receive test results. While testing supplies continue to be limited and are being used carefully, Staten is not aware of any situation where someone who meets the criteria has not received a test when a health care provider determined a test is warranted. If you become sick and need medical attention, call your healthcare provider before visiting the office to make a plan for treatment.