

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Delta Variant Identified in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) was notified that the Delta COVID-19 variant has been detected in the nine-county health district. This highly contagious strain was first detected in India and has now made its way into the United States and Nebraska. This strain is being carefully monitored by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the CDC because it is more easily spread than the original COVID-19 strain seen at the beginning of the pandemic. This strain has also been affecting children in greater numbers.

COVID-19 is caused by a virus. Viruses frequently change (also known as mutation) to adapt to the human immune system. The greater the spread of a virus, the more likely it is to start mutating.

The most common way that the Delta strain is brought into Nebraska is through travel. If you will be traveling, please follow all guidelines provided by transportation authorities. Wear your mask over your nose and mouth and wash your hands frequently.

DHHS recommends being tested for COVID-19 three to five days after arriving back in the United States, whether you have been vaccinated or not. If you are not fully vaccinated, self-quarantine for 7 days with a negative test result or 10 days without a test. If you are fully vaccinated there is no need to self-quarantine. Monitor yourself and traveling companions for symptoms and take other precautions such as wearing a mask and social distancing for 14 days after you return, regardless of vaccination status.

Vaccination is still one of the best ways to protect yourself against COVID-19 infection. Pfizer vaccine has been approved for children aged 12 and over. The Moderna and J&J vaccines are approved for anyone 18 and older. Vaccination clinics are held throughout the health district at local pharmacies and clinics. SWNPHD's McCook office has Moderna available on Mondays, J&J on Wednesdays, and Pfizer on Fridays. Please call 308-345-4223 to make an appointment. For a complete list of COVID-19 vaccine locations visit swhealth.ne.gov.

College students should check with their college or university to see whether COVID-19 vaccination will be required prior to attending classes.

COVID-19 information can be found at swhealth.ne.gov. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook and can be reached by calling 308-345-4223.

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