

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Myra Stoney, Health Director, director@swhealth.ne.gov, 308-345-4223

Long-term Effects of COVID-19

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) had 89 new cases of COVID-19 reported from September 7 to September 13, 2021, bringing the weekly average to 84 cases per week in the last 30 days. A breakdown by age includes: 0 to 19 – 25; 20 to 29 – 17; 30 to 39 – 15; 40 to 49 – 6; 50 to 59 – 7; 60 to 69 – 13; 70 to 79 – 5; 80 and over – 1. The total number of cases is 4,414. Vaccination rates across the health district have reached 48%.

Researchers are actively studying the symptoms caused by COVID-19, but many of the long-term effects are still being found. The National Institutes of Health reported that large numbers of patients who have been infected with SARS-CoV-2 continue to experience a number of symptoms long past the time that they've recovered from the initial stages of COVID-19 illness. Often referred to as "Long COVID", these symptoms, which can include fatigue, shortness of breath, "brain fog", sleep disorders, fevers, gastrointestinal symptoms, anxiety, and depression, can persist for months and can range from mild to severe.

Effects of COVID-19 disease in children may also last for several weeks or more. In a study shared by Dr. Kari Simonsen of Children's Hospital in Omaha, 25% of children hospitalized for COVID-19 had long-lasting symptoms including fatigue, sleep disturbance, and sensory deficits seven months after being discharged from the hospital.

SWNPHD would like to answer questions that residents have about the COVID vaccines, such as: Do COVID-19 vaccines contain microchips? No. COVID-19 vaccines do not contain microchips. Vaccines are developed to fight against disease and are not administered to track your movement. Vaccines work by stimulating your immune system to produce antibodies, exactly like it would if you were exposed to the disease. After getting vaccinated, you develop immunity to that disease, without having to get the disease first.

From January through August of 2021, approximately 2,800 breakthrough cases of COVID-19 were identified in fully vaccinated individuals in Nebraska, making up about 2% of all cases in the same time period. This is less than the 5% that was expected when the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were first approved for use. Both were predicted to be 95% effective. SWNPHD continues to monitor if the Delta variant is causing more breakthrough cases as data becomes available.

Visit swhealth.ne.gov for information on COVID-19. 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. ###