



**Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment**  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**April 13, 2021**

**Release: IMMEDIATE**

**From: Dawn James, Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment Director, PIO**

## **COVID Data for April 1 – April 13 and Other Updates**

COVID infections in Kit Carson County continue to show some improvement. For the two week period of April 1 through April 13, there were 9 positive cases for a positivity rate of 4.2%. Kit Carson County is 25<sup>th</sup> in the state for the 7-day incidence rate per 100,000. As of April 11<sup>th</sup>, the incidence rate is 126:100,000. The hospital continues to report a decrease in the number of hospitalization due to COVID-related infections.

As of April 6<sup>th</sup> and reported by CDPHE, the east-central Colorado data region which includes Kit Carson, Lincoln, Cheyenne and Elbert counties is the region of highest concern in the State for incidence of COVID. So while Kit Carson County is seeing positivity rates improve, COVID continues to be present here and in the region.

## **COVID Testing Still Advised and an Important Tool for Local Health Officials**

It is still advised to have a COVID test done when symptomatic in order to rule it out as the cause of illness. There are other viruses and illnesses circulating in the county that cause health concerns. Identifying the correct cause of illness will help get you the appropriate treatment for your symptoms and will help stop any spread of COVID. Testing is available at the Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment Monday through Friday.

## **Johnson and Johnson COVID Vaccine Distribution in Kit Carson County Began Saturday, April 10, 2021**

Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment began distributing the Johnson and Johnson one dose vaccine on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Ninety doses were distributed during the 3 hour drive-thru event. No problems were encountered by anyone receiving the vaccine on the day of the drive-thru or have been reported during the last few days following it. KCCDPHE was advised on the morning of April 13<sup>th</sup> to pause the distribution of the J & J vaccine for the time being out of an abundance of caution due to reports of six individuals out of several thousand in the United States who developed rare blood clots after receiving the vaccine. This is an extremely rare problem.

One of the reasons the FDA and CDC are recommending this pause is to ensure that health care providers are aware of these potential but rare adverse events, and can respond accordingly. The treatment for these types of blood clots is not the common treatment for blood clots and more time is needed to make sure healthcare providers know how to recognize and treat these rare occurrences.

Individuals who received the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine more than a month ago are at very low risk of developing these rare and serious side effects.

Anyone who received the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine less than a month ago should monitor themselves for three weeks after receiving the vaccine for the following symptoms and seek medical attention immediately if they occur:

- Severe headache
- Shortness of breath
- Chest or persistent abdominal pain
- Leg swelling
- Blurred vision
- Confusion or seizures
- Bruising beyond the injection site

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine makes up only a small portion of Colorado's weekly vaccine allocation. KCCDPHE continues to provide weekly Moderna Vaccine on Wednesdays and Fridays. To schedule your appointment go to <https://kitcarsoncounty.colorado.gov/> or call 719-346-7158, ext. 432.

### **Governor turns COVID response over to Local Health Departments and Boards of Health Effective April 16<sup>th</sup>**

Effective Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, Kit Carson County will be able to determine their own strategies in how to manage the COVID response. Plans are being discussed by healthcare officials to determine the best path forward.

Effective last week, the KCC Board of Health voted to remove the indoor mask mandate for Kit Carson County. There will continue to be some capacity and mask orders dictated by the State in its next Public Health Order, however, with the exception of a few lingering rules (such as the State mask mandate for schools until the end of the school year and the 6 feet between tables and seating rules) there are no capacity restrictions for indoor or outdoor gatherings. There may still be regulatory agencies that will continue to require masks for some business including CMS that regulates healthcare, long term care and assisted living facilities; DORA that regulates salons, spas, dentists, chiropractic and other health professions as well as funeral homes.

Effective Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, buffet-style meals at restaurants and schools may resume! With that being said, it is highly recommended by local public health to encourage the use of hand sanitizer by folks prior to handling common serving tools and frequent sanitizing of sneeze guards to lessen the possibility of the spread of disease.

Caution remains the message of the day. It is still important to remain alert and to use caution when interacting with large crowds in indoor spaces. Using personal responsibility is the goal for the

community for the foreseeable future. The best defense against spreading COVID is good hand washing, covering your nose and mouth with your elbow when you sneeze or cough, avoiding large indoor crowds, spending more time outdoors and staying home from work, social gatherings and school if you don't feel well

For questions regarding any of the lifting of restrictions and how they apply to you or your business, call Dawn James, Director of Public Health at 719-346-7158, ext. 412.

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