



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Cole County
Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – July 14, 2020

Clarifications/Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Cases

COLE COUNTY, MO – In an effort to reduce confusion and answer questions, the Cole County Health Department has prepared the information below.

What is a COVID-19 test? The confirmatory test that is being used is the PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test. This test is able to detect if the virus is present in your sinus cavity on the date the specimen is collected. A nasopharyngeal swab is used to collect the specimen from one or both nostrils.

How are positive numbers counted? In Cole County, only those residents with a PCR positive test are counted as a case; if a person tests positive more than once, they are still only counted once.

Are Probable Cases or Contacts counted as a positive? The individuals identified as a contact to a positive case or a probable case are not counted as a positive case in Cole County. Only individuals that receive a positive PCR test are counted as a positive case.

What about Inaccurate Reporting? There have been reports of individuals receiving a call about a positive test result without actually being tested. This should not be happening and if it does, it needs to be reported to the Cole County Health Department immediately.

What happens when someone tests positive? When a resident of Cole County tests positive for COVID-19, the Cole County Health Department does a contact investigation to determine who the positive case's close contacts are. A close contact is defined as someone who was closer than six (6) feet for fifteen (15) minutes or longer. Once we get those names and numbers, we call the close contacts and talk to them about being quarantined for fourteen (14) days after the date of the last exposure to the positive case. If you do not get a call from the Health Department, you were not exposed and are not considered a close contact. You do not need to be tested unless you are symptomatic, and you do not need to quarantine.

How long do positive cases have to quarantine? If you test positive for COVID-19, you will need to stay quarantined for at least ten (10) days from your symptom onset or positive test if

you are asymptomatic. Three criteria must be met to be considered not contagious, recovered and released from quarantine. You can be released from quarantine if it has been ten (10) days since symptoms began or a positive test, you have been fever free for 72 hours without fever reducing medication and have improvement of all symptoms.

As this situation changes, the Cole County Health Department will be sending out additional information. If you have questions, please consult a factual source, such as <http://www.CDC.gov> or www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus. The community can also call (573) 636-2181, or MDHSS 24-hour hotline (877) 435-8411 to address questions or concerns related to COVID-19.

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