



Routt County Joint Information Center

March 24, 2020

Main FAQs on COVID-19

What are the city and county doing?

The city and county are working closely with federal, state, and local public health officials to closely deal with an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The best thing we can do is stay informed, stay home and practice physical distancing of six feet. Our city and county are doing everything possible to keep our community safe.

What happens if we have an outbreak, how are we prepared?

Our Routt County Emergency Operations Center, which brings all local emergency resources together, has been administering the local resource for the past several weeks. This includes first responders to public health and city and county departments required to help deal with the response. Our goal is making our community as safe as possible and working together to slow the spread of the virus.

What is the Public Health Department doing?

Prior to any COVID-19 cases in Colorado, the Routt County Public Health Department was distributing cleaning and prevention guidance to community partners, the airport, healthcare providers in the community, businesses, schools, Skilled Nursing/Assisted Nursing Facilities and other vulnerable populations. The Public Health Department has ramped up and hired more staff to address this pandemic. Public health nurses have been staffing the testing site along with staff from UCHHealth Yampa Valley Medical Center. Public Health is issuing quarantine and isolation orders and conducting tracing on COVID-19 positive cases. They developed a High-Risk Task Force for vulnerable population preparedness to work with community agencies serving the elderly and at-risk populations. The Health Department receives daily alerts from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment as well as participating in weekly calls with the CDC. The Routt County Public Health Department has been communicating out Health Alerts to all healthcare providers with new recommendations from Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

How come we don't have enough tests? Who gets tested?

We all agree, one of the challenges has been access to testing. We all want more tests available with quicker results, but based on current supplies, we are prioritizing testing for the highest at-risk patients, first responders, medical providers and law enforcement. A large portion of population can manage the virus at home. Testing results have taken 5-7 days to process.

If we can't get tested what should we do?

There is currently **no** vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Below are suggested measures from the CDC that can prevent the spread of respiratory diseases:

- Practice Physical distancing of six feet or more
- Follow guidelines on travel
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick and keep your children at home when they are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe or using an EPA-approved cleaning product.
- It is important to call ahead before going to see a doctor or emergency room to prevent the spread of illness. Tell them your symptoms and that you suspect you were exposed to someone with COVID-19 or had recent travel to a country that is experiencing community spread.

What happens if I have come in direct contact with someone who has tested positive? What should I do?

It is recommended that you self-quarantine for 14 days. If you develop symptoms call your healthcare provider. If you don't have symptoms, self-isolate, but no need to call healthcare provider (please don't overwhelm them).

What happens if you have symptoms?

If you have any symptoms – even mild ones – the Department of Public Health urges you to stay home and isolate yourself until:

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (without the use of medicine) AND
- Other symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) have improved AND
- At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- Anyone in your household you have had close contact with (within six feet for approximately 10 minutes) should [self-quarantine](#) for 14 days, even if you haven't been tested for COVID-19.

- If you have a medical emergency, call 911. If you have severe respiratory symptoms, especially shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, tell the 911 dispatcher about your symptoms. Do not wait for a COVID-19 test to call 911.

Do we have enough hospital beds?

Communities across the world have taken drastic measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, shutting down almost every form of public gathering, from schools to restaurants to church services. Among the primary reasons for these limitations is the fact that hospitals do not have the resources to treat the influx of patients who could become infected if such activities continue unabated. Locally, UCHHealth Yampa Valley Medical Center is a 39-bed hospital. The hospital has visitor restrictions in place to keep its patients, staff and physicians as safe and healthy as possible. The public should prioritize using other health resources, such as self-quarantining or consulting their primary care physician. Those without a primary care physician can schedule a virtual urgent care appointment online.

The community's health professionals have plans in place to address growth and if additional resources are required.

Why are officials not releasing exact locations where infected people visited?

Health officials determined it is unlikely that releasing those locations would help. Medical experts believe the virus cannot survive on a surface for more than three days and typically do not receive information about the places where patients may have been until after the three-day window had passed. It appears that close proximity contact is more relevant than simply knowing a location.

What should individuals be doing right now?

Pretty much what we've been doing so far – stay home and limit contact with others through physical distancing, stay informed from reputable resources, remain calm and don't forget about your mental health. Check on neighbors, family and friends with a quick call and through digital options.

Who is working to contain this virus?

The Routt County Emergency Operations Center working together along with state organizations such as Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE), the Governor's office and state agencies as well as national entities like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition, all local agencies from North Routt to South Routt, West Routt and Hayden and those throughout the city and county, both public and private, are working to help the community get through this situation. It seems overwhelming, but we will get through this together much like the Yampa Valley has done for generations.

Are there enough food and supplies in supermarkets?

While stores may be out-of-stock on some products (like toilet paper and cleaning supplies), stores express confidence that items are being replenished. The biggest driver of the out of stocks on shelves is that people are over-purchasing. It would help our entire community if people would follow the recommendation to purchase just what you need for 5-7 days, less if you can shop on a more frequent basis. In addition, many stores have adjusted hours for restocking and cleaning as well as established specific hours for vulnerable shoppers who must leave home to obtain their groceries.

What is happening to all the businesses that have closed?

Our community has come together to support local outlets and the Chamber, Colorado Work Force Center, Social Services and Human Services are working to share resources, assisting those who need aid and relaying information about programs. While the business environment will continue to change over the next weeks and months, we must all adapt to these instabilities and most importantly, look out for each other.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Check out the Routt County COVID-19 website: www.covid19routtcounty.com.

Other relevant websites: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, <https://covid19.colorado.gov/>,

Routt County COVID-19 Call line: 970-871-8444, 8:00 am-5:00pm

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