HEALTH DEPARTMENT *of Northwest Michigan*

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Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update

New COVID-19 Test to Treat option available
Northwest Michigan now equipped for one-stop antiviral treatments

A new federal Test to Treat program gives residents fast and easy access to COVID-19 medicines. The initiative, offered by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness & Response (ASPR), is hosted by pharmacies, clinics and long-term care facilities – called Test to Treat sites – throughout Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties.

People who test positive at the local sites can now be assessed to determine if a prescription from a healthcare provider is appropriate for them. If so, a prescription for antiviral pills can be filled at the same location. People can also bring results obtained from a home testing kit to Test to Treat sites to be evaluated by a healthcare provider for treatment.

"The antiviral medication can help prevent severe illness and hospitalization when taken within five days of the first COVID-19 symptoms," said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, Health Department of Northwest Michigan Medical Director. "All qualified healthcare providers can prescribe these therapeutics to patients who are at increased risk for developing severe COVID-19."

The antivirals consist of Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's Lagevrio (molnupiravir). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) distributes the treatments to states and territories for free on a weekly basis.

"The Test to Treat program can simplify the process for people to protect themselves from serious illness from COVID-19 by easily locating available treatment," said health department health officer Lisa Peacock. "This new tool is one more way for us to combat the spread and impact of COVID-19. Another valuable tool is for eligible residents to receive their second COVID-19 booster."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its Interim Clinical Considerations on April 21 regarding the option to receive a second COVID-19 vaccine booster dose. Following is a list of people who are eligible to receive a second booster dose using an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least four months after their first booster dose:
- People ages 50 years and older
- People ages 12 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised
- People ages 18 years and older who received Janssen COVID-19 vaccine as both a primary and a booster dose

Among people who are eligible for a second booster dose, the following people might consider getting the second booster as soon as possible, four months after their first booster dose:
- People with underlying medical conditions that increase the risk of severe COVID-19 disease
- People living with someone who is immunocompromised, at increased risk for severe disease, or who cannot be vaccinated due to age or contraindication

- People at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19, such as through occupational, institutional, or other activities (e.g., travel or large gatherings)
- People who live or work in or near an area where the COVID-19 community level is medium or high or are traveling to such an area

Eligible people who might consider waiting to receive a second booster dose include:
- People who have had a COVID-19 infection within the last 3 months
- People who may be hesitant about getting another recommended booster dose in the future, as a booster dose may be more important in the fall and/or if a variant-specific vaccine is needed

Although community levels in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties remain low, these levels vary, and it is important to continue to use the available tools to combat COVID-19. These includes recommendations to stay current on COVID-19 vaccines and to get tested if you have symptoms. To determine if you are eligible for a booster vaccination or to schedule your booster shot, click here.

For access to the COVID-19 Test to Treat fact sheet, click here.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by liking and following our Facebook page and visiting our COVID-19 Data Dashboard. To locate a testing facility, visit the Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website. To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the MI Safe Start Map website. For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS vaccine website or the CDC vaccine website.

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COVID-19 CASE DATA
APRIL 20- APRIL 26, 2022

	Total New Cases	Avg. Daily Cases	New Deaths
Antrim	17	2.4	1
Charlevoix	12	1.7	0
Emmet	32	4.5	0
Otsego	11	1.5	0

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Public Health Information Line: 1-800-386-5959
More COVID data:www.nwhealth.org/covid19
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