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City-Cowley County
Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 13, 2021

County Wide COVID-19 Update

The City-Cowley County Health Department continues to monitor the health of our county residents and the ongoing cases of COVID-19 locally. The following is a weekly update to inform the community of the current status of the pandemic in Cowley County.

During the past two weeks demand for vaccination has increased in the county. We continue to have all three vaccines available, Moderna, Pfizer and J&J for those who would like more information please call us and we can discuss any concerns you may have and arrange a vaccination visit for if you so desire.

During the past week 89 new cases were recorded in Cowley County, down slightly from the 95 new cases in the previous week. To date we have recorded 183 new cases in August, which is an average of 15 new cases being reported per day. There are currently 76 active cases in the county. We have recorded 336 new cases since July 1, 2021.

One hundred-thirty-five (135) cases have occurred in people who were not vaccinated and have no known immunity. Forty-eight (48) of the COVID-19 cases this month are classified as “break-through” cases. Sadly, we have also learned of 2 fatalities this month that have occurred in people recently diagnosed with the virus. Both persons had pre-existing co-morbidities which may have contributed to their deaths. Our county-wide total has now risen to 111 deaths.

Requests for testing continue to rise. Data received from local testing providers indicates that 483 people have been tested so far this month. The crude infection rate for the month has climbed to 38%. Results of virus genotyping indicate the Delta variants remain the dominant cause (99%) of current infections in the county.

This week the FDA announced considerations are being given to booster dose vaccines for people that are immunocompromised or at extreme high-risk for infection. No formal recommendation has yet been provided to local Health Departments for action. I will keep the community informed if that occurs. We have had several calls from people concerned about getting a boost dose if needed. If you received your initial doses from the Health Department, we will automatically reach out to you if and when additional vaccination is advised.

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Last week emergency use authorization for use of monoclonal antibody drugs for the early treatment of COVID-19 cases in hospital settings was provided. The current use of monoclonal therapy for COVID-19 IS NOT a cure, nor is it a replacement for vaccination. It is an additional treatment that can be used by physicians when treating newly diagnosed patients, especially those at high risk with confirmed COVID-19.

As was stated last week, **if** the infection rate continues at the current pace we could see as many as 450 new cases in Cowley County during August 2021, which could be a new monthly high for the year to date.

For your information we will chart and post the monthly numbers in the chart below:

Month/Year	New Cases
April 2021	47
May 2021	56
June 2021	28
July 2021	153
August 2021 (to date)	183

Cowley County, along with most all counties in Kansas, remain identified as an area where infection is currently widespread. Community members are advised to take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of illness. Stay home if you feel ill, wash your hands frequently, use hand sanitizer, wear a mask if you so desire, avoid crowds and large social gatherings - especially people unknown to you. If you develop any symptoms of illness, be tested to determine if you are infected and to seek medical help. You are also reminded that you **MUST** stay home and isolate from others if you are ill. Please do not go out and spread the virus further.

Additional vaccination events for the community are being planned. The Health Department will be involved with many of these events please monitor local news and our web site and Facebook page for details. Vaccine is also available through local pharmacies and at the Health Department.

Local schools including colleges are reconvening. There are on-site vaccination clinics taking place. Schools may have policies and options for testing of students and staff on site in some locations. All schools have plans to deal with infected students and staff for the new school year and will share their data with the Health Department.

Remember the virus does not discriminate. It will seek out a host that is unprotected in order to spread. Current data indicates that if you are not vaccinated your risk of infection is 3 times higher than if you were vaccinated. We urge you to consider vaccination to protect your health. **THE CHOICE IS YOURS**, and we respect your choice.

We will update this report next Friday, August 20, 2021, until then I hope you all stay well.