



City of Meriden, Connecticut

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Meriden COVID-19 Response Update – March 20, 2020

On March 19, 2020, our office received notice of our first confirmed positive case of COVID-19 in Meriden. We have anticipated this for a long time, and worked with the CT Department of Public Health to do what is called “contact investigation” for those considered to be a close contacts of the case.

With increased testing we are anticipating additional cases. We continue to urge the public to continue to practice everyday preventive actions. They are simple and *they work*:

- If you are older or have a serious chronic illness, please avoid crowds.
- Practice social distancing – stay home!
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue; throw out the tissue in a lined trash container.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid hand shaking – do an “elbow bump” or wave instead.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily. These include tables. Countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles using a regular household detergent and water.
- 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 a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Always wash your hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.

Key Messages – March 20, 2020

- Many local hospitals are starting to provide “drive-through” testing. Locally, these include Bristol Hospital, Yale New Haven, and Waterbury. MidState Medical Center will be online Wednesday. A doctor’s order is needed to get a test.

- People without symptoms should not be tested for COVID-19. Testing individuals with no symptoms is not recommended by CDC.
- If you were with someone who does not have symptoms, the risk of transmission is very low.
- While we are seeing less and less seasonal flu cases in Meriden, the flu virus is still circulating as well as the common cold. Having respiratory symptoms DOES NOT mean you have COVID-19.
- People are at higher risk for COVID-19 if they have symptoms of the virus (cough, fever, shortness of breath) **AND** if they were in contact with a positive case of COVID-19 or have traveled to locations with community transmission.
- Someone is considered a contact if they have had direct, face-to-face contact with a person with confirmed COVID-19.
- People who are severely ill or think they have COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider for instructions. These people SHOULD NOT go directly to a healthcare facility without first calling a healthcare provider (unless they are experiencing a medical emergency).
- People sick with mild symptoms of respiratory illness should stay home to take care of themselves and stay away from other. This includes distancing themselves from people in their household *and* vehicles. Follow the CDC “What to do if you are sick” guidance that can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

COVID-19 is a rapidly changing emerging public health issue. We urge Meriden residents to stay informed. Please visit the following websites often:

- CDC Coronavirus website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- CT DPH website: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>. This website also has information on behavioral health resources for coping with stress and talking with children during infectious disease outbreaks.
- City updates are being posted at www.meridenct.gov.

In addition, there are 2 hotlines for information:

- Individuals who have general questions that are not answered on the websites above can also **call 2-1-1 for assistance**. The information line is available 24 hours a day and has multilingual assistance and TDD/TTY access for those with a hearing impairment. The hotline is only intended to be used by individuals who are not experiencing symptoms but may have general questions related to COVID-19. Anyone experiencing symptoms is strongly urged to contact their medical provider to seek treatment.
- **Hartford Healthcare COVID-19 Hotline:** 1-833-621-0600. This line is staffed 24/7 by medical professionals.