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Health departments in Northern Illinois to the public: COVID knows no boundaries

*Public urged to work together and follow CDC guidance for
medium community level*

Local health departments belonging to the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium (NIPHC) are advising people who live and work in the region that COVID-19 case rates are rising and now is the time to work together to avoid a surge in cases, hospitalizations and deaths.

Most counties in the northern Illinois region – including Cook (city and suburbs), DeKalb, DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry, Kendall, Will and Winnebago – have moved from low to medium community level transmission for COVID-19 in recent weeks. Based on regional metrics, additional counties in northern Illinois are expected to also move to medium community level transmission.

[CDC Community Levels](#) show the level of impact COVID-19 illness is having on health and healthcare systems to help communities and their residents decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. The CDC defines medium level as higher than 200 cases per 100,000 residents.

“We want our communities to be proactive and take additional precautions to prevent surges that have been observed in other areas of the country, which could impact hospitals’ resources and our congregate settings that care for the most vulnerable,” said Dr. Sandra Martell, NIPHC President and Winnebago County Health Department Public Health Administrator. “COVID-19 knows no bounds. We are all interconnected and must work together.”

Protect yourself and others from getting and spreading COVID-19:

- Know your risks. If you are immunocompromised or [high risk](#) for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to [wear a mask](#) or a respirator and if you are a candidate for available treatment options.
- Be considerate of others. People are free to wear a mask at any time.
- Stay up-to-date on vaccinations or get vaccinated if you haven’t done so already.

- Stay home if sick and avoid others who are sick. Follow [CDC recommendations for isolation and quarantine](#), including getting tested if you are exposed to COVID-19 or have symptoms.

“These recommendations are not new but are being emphasized to protect our communities from further increases in COVID-19,” said Dr. Rachel Rubin, Co-Lead and Senior Medical Officer at Cook County Department of Public Health.

To order free supplies such as masks and test kits and to find treatment locations, vaccine and boosters, visit [covid.gov](#).

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