

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

## Mayor's Update



### Middlesex County COVID-19 Community Level High

Seven counties in Massachusetts, including Middlesex County where Newton is located, now have high community levels of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends people in these areas wear masks in indoor public spaces, stay up-to-date with vaccines/boosters, get tested if experiencing symptoms, and consider taking additional precautions if at a higher risk for severe illness.

The CDC tracks COVID-19 data at a county level on their website - [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) - as a tool for individuals and communities to make decisions about their COVID-19 prevention strategies. The community levels of COVID-19 are based on incidence rate, new hospital admissions with confirmed COVID-19 per 100,000 people, and percent of inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients. This CDC page is updated weekly on Thursday evenings.

Newton Health and Human Services suggests that individuals base their personal and household prevention behaviors on the COVID-19 Community Level in their county and whether they or someone in their household is at risk for severe disease. (See the CDC information below; click on the chart to connect to the CDC website.)

## What Prevention Steps Should You Take Based on Your COVID-19 Community Level?

Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li> <li><a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are <a href="#">at high risk for severe illness</a>, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions</li> <li>Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li> <li><a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear a <a href="#">mask</a> indoors in public</li> <li>Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li> <li><a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li> <li>Additional precautions may be needed for people <a href="#">at high risk for severe illness</a></li> </ul>
<p>People may choose to mask at any time. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.</p>		

The tools that have been used to prevent transmission of COVID-19 infection and severe illness are still effective. Newton Health and Human Services strongly encourages masking while indoors along with hand hygiene, staying home when sick, getting tested (even with mild symptoms of COVID-19), and if one tests positive to speak quickly with a health care provider about treatment options. As always, the best prevention measure is to stay up to date on COVID vaccines.

At this time, we do not plan to reinstate masking requirements. Newton will continue to monitor closely all the data and advice from the CDC, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and medical professionals.

Warmly,

Ruthanne



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