



Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Six Tips for the New Normal in a COVID-19 World

Willapa Harbor Hospital provides essential recommendations for staying safe and healthy.

SOUTH BEND, Wash. (August 24, 2020) – As Governor Jay Inslee institutes new amendments to Washington’s reopening plan, local health officials in Pacific County continue to urge members of the community to take safety measures to ensure their health and that of their families.

As of July 26, there have been 53,884 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Washington State, with 1,592 deaths. While infections and statistics in the Pacific Northwest are not as high as other hotspots, such as California, Florida, and Texas, local health officials continue to warn the public that now is not the time to become complacent.

“Coronavirus is still very much a threat in every community across the U.S.,” says Matthew Kempton, CEO of Willapa Harbor Hospital. “It takes just one person to start a community outbreak. Which is why we must continue to take all of the safety precautions necessary to ensure our community remains healthy.”

Kempton says that the medical team at Willapa Harbor Hospital and its medical clinics continue to see regular patients as well as test for possible infections, including antibody testing.

Echoing health recommendations from recent months, Matthew shares six important tips everyone in the community should keep in mind.

Continue to wear face coverings when in public

As the debate regarding face coverings rolls on in the United States, countries across the world have continued what has become normalcy for decades. Studies have shown that wearing a face covering that appropriately covers both your nose and mouth can help reduce the spread of viruses, such as coronavirus, by limiting the amount of potentially infected particles and droplets from traveling greater distances.

In a recent press release from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the government organization says that there is a growing body of evidence that cloth face coverings provide source control – that is, they help prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading COVID-19 to others.

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Face coverings are not a substitute for social distancing practices

With cases of COVID-19 still on the rise in most states, the CDC continues to urge individuals to practice social distancing. That means limiting time outside your home and staying at least 6 feet apart when in public settings, such as a grocery store.

Wash your hands frequently

Hand hygiene is an important and effective measure to prevent the spread of many bacteria and viruses, including the coronavirus. Practicing hand hygiene, which includes the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer, has shown to reduce the direct and indirect spread of pathogens between people.

When it comes to handwashing, individuals should use soap and water for at least 20 seconds before eating, after using the restroom, and after coming home from being out in public. Additionally, the use of hand sanitizer should be from products containing 60-95 percent alcohol. Hand sanitizer is not a replacement for handwashing but can be a viable alternative when soap and water are not feasible.

Do not put off healthcare

Healthcare providers continue to remind the public that it is more important than ever to ensure that you are in optimal health. One great way to do that is by scheduling a yearly wellness exam at the Pacific Family Health Center or Willapa Harbor Hospital Clinics.

Yearly wellness exams, covered by Medicare and most insurance plans, include a variety of routine screenings that allow your healthcare provider to assess your overall health, record any changes and detect signs of potential health issues. In addition, they allow your healthcare provider to recommend additional screenings and provide you with information that you can use to take charge of your health.

For children, health physicals are more important than ever this year, regardless of whether your child will be participating in virtual or in-person classes.

Area clinics offer a convenient choice for healthcare by cutting down on travel time for patients. Appointments can be scheduled for many services, including immunizations, comprehensive adolescent and adult health, Medicare screenings, women's health, and annual wellness exams.

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Get tested for coronavirus

Many people have wondered whether they should get tested for COVID-19. While not everyone needs to be tested, your primary medical provider can help make the decision whether you need to get tested, based on your symptoms and risk category.

Some employers have been requesting that employees get tested for either the COVID-19 diagnostic test or immune response test – otherwise known as antibody testing. Willapa Harbor Hospital offers both tests.

“Each test is performed for a specific reason. Based on symptoms, exposure risks, or history of possible exposure, your medical provider can help you decide which test you might need to take,” Kempton says. “When it comes to the coronavirus, knowledge is key. More importantly, testing is key.”

Be kind to one another

Kindness goes a long way, especially in a time of uncertainty and uneasiness. Whether you are in line at the grocery store or the doctor’s office, being patient and showing kindness is something that can undoubtedly be spread positively.

For more information about local healthcare services, visit the Willapa Harbor Hospital website at www.willapaharborhospital.com. To learn more about the availability of COVID-19 testing, including rapid antibody testing, please call 360-875-4566.

About Willapa Harbor Hospital

Founded in 1954, Willapa Harbor Hospital serves the healthcare needs of north Pacific County residents. The hospital offers a wealth of medical services, including in-patient care, a Level V 24-hour trauma center, advanced radiology services (including CT, MRIs, ultrasound, and mammograms), an outpatient lab, surgical services, diabetic education, and more. Pacific Family Health Center and Willapa Harbor Hospital Clinic are medical clinics that are both operated by Willapa Harbor Hospital. For more information, please visit www.willapaharborhospital.com.

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