



Petersburg Medical Center

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PRESS RELEASE

Date: July 30, 2021
From: Petersburg Medical Center

The COVID-19 dashboard has been updated based on information from Public Health:

Active cases: 3 Resident cases: 3 Non-resident cases: 0

Delta Variant: Confirmed in Petersburg a total of four cases. This is a variant of concern across Alaska and the US because it is more easily transmitted to others.

Early recognition of symptoms improves outcome: Community spread is an ongoing concern and PMC encourages persons to be watchful of symptoms that are suggestive of COVID-19 and **test early**. Physicians have more treatment options when COVID-19 is diagnosed early in the course of the infection. Delays of greater than 5 days after symptoms develop may put patients at greater risk for more severe COVID. Early treatment options are more likely to have improved outcome (even with breakthrough infections). Patients who are high risk are particularly vulnerable to complications from serious COVID-19 illness.

Hospital capacity: PMC has not been impacted by hospital admissions. However, hospitals in the region and Anchorage are impacted by high admissions for all reasons and hospital capacity and medevac availability for patient transfers out of Petersburg may be delayed or diverted to another facility out of state. The ability of a facility to accept a patient from Petersburg may be impacted by the numbers of patients and also more importantly by the availability of health care providers.

Regional Outbreaks: The communities of Cordova, Juneau and Sitka have seen a significant increase of cases in the past several weeks. These communities have high vaccination rates in those persons eligible to be vaccinated however the overwhelming cases in these communities are persons NOT vaccinated. PMC continues to monitor conditions in these areas because there are people traveling between these communities and Petersburg and testing is encouraged for anyone who has been to communities with high rates of COVID-19 infections.

Testing is available. Testing is strongly encouraged in everyone with symptoms, even if you are fully vaccinated. If you develop symptoms, such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing call the Petersburg Medical Center COVID Information Line at 907-772-5788 before going to the hospital or clinic. You will be provided guidance by a medical professional.

Asymptomatic testing is available and there is **no charge** for this test. Call the COVID Information Line at 907-772-5788.

Persons with severe symptoms requiring ambulance transport are asked to notify the 911 dispatcher that you have COVID-19 symptoms.



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Take appropriate precautions to prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community. If you test positive, please cooperate with Public Health, your close contacts will be provided instructions to quarantine and monitor for symptoms. Telling your close contacts in advance of the Public Health call will greatly assist in controlling continued spread of COVID-19 in our community. Contact tracing is extremely important for preventing further spread of COVID-19.

What can you do? As cases continue to increase across Alaska and the Lower 48, follow the recommendations from the CDC:

- Continue to wear masks at public indoor locations, even if you have been vaccinated. Until researchers know more, it is possible the vaccine will protect you from getting sick but may not prevent you from spreading the virus to others.
- Continue to practice social distancing and keep social circles small. Postpone indoor gatherings until a safer time.
- Wash your hands often. Clean and sanitize common areas and surfaces.
- Get tested if you feel sick, if you have been exposed to COVID-19 and before and after you travel.

Vaccines: The COVID-19 vaccine provides good protection against serious COVID illness that results in hospitalization and death. Greater than 95% of the hospitalized patients in Alaska are not vaccinated. Vaccinations for people aged 12 and older may be scheduled by calling the COVID Information Line at 907-772-5788, option 4. The Public Health Nurse is also offering vaccinations by appointment at 907-772-4611.

For detailed information on COVID in Petersburg, visit the [Petersburg COVID Dashboard](#), the information is updated daily.

Please refer to the CDC webpage for information on symptoms and precautionary measures at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Additional current information on COVID-19 is available through the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) at <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/default.aspx>

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