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Cc:
Subject: Exposure Information for Public
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Judge McDaniel,

Here are the basics of exposure to answer the many questions that people have.

Was I exposed and am I at risk of getting sick?

How is the virus spread? The virus does not have wings or legs. It needs humans to share it. And the main way COVID-19 is shared is by respiratory droplets. These are the droplets that occur when we cough or sneeze, as well as talk or laugh. Normal talking produces droplets, but they don't travel very far before being pulled down by gravity. Coughing, sneezing and laughing forces more wind out which carries the droplets a bit further before they fall. But they still tend to fall to the ground within 6 feet.

Person A is sick and they are around Person B, C and D.

Person B, C and D are at risk of getting sick.

Person B lives with Person E. Even though Person B is at risk of getting sick person E is not.

However, Person E will be at risk if Person B gets sick.

How to determine if you are exposed and at risk of getting sick?

Most of us recognize that if we live in the same house or are an intimate partner with someone who gets sick with COVID-19 we are at risk of being infected. And if we take care of someone who has COVID-19, and don't use the right protection, we are at risk of being infected.

But what about being in the community, shopping, or even eating out?

It depends on exposure time and distance. We commonly use 15-20 minutes of time to mean an exposure. The more time you spend around someone the more exposure you may have. We use 6 feet because the droplets generally fall to the ground before that.

Ask yourself the following questions. How much contact did you really have with the sick person? Were you within 6 feet? Were you face to face (like talking to each other)? Did you have direct physical contact (shake hands, hug, high five)? Was the person coughing or sneezing when you were within 6 feet of them? Did you take something from them (pen, paper, tools, phone, etc)? Were you in the same room? Did you travel together in a car, bus or plane (and sit within 6 feet)? Did you sleep in the same room or share a bathroom? Did you fix food together?

If an answer is yes, then how many times and how many minutes did it last?

If all the answers are no, you did not have a significant exposure to that person and are low risk. If some answers are yes, but the time was less than 15 minutes, it is considered a low risk.

EXAMPLES:

- A. You work with someone, but their office is on the other side of the building. You walk down the hall, stick your head in and say good morning and go back to your office. You have almost no exposure to that person.
- B. You go to a restaurant and dine in. A waiter that worked yesterday has stayed home because he is sick. You have no exposure to him.
- C. You go to a restaurant for curbside. They stand 5 feet away from your window to take your order (6 min). They bring your food out (1 min). You find out a week later they were sick. You are lower risk, because there was not much time involved and little contact.
- D. You are at work and there is an employee meeting for 20 minutes. Everyone is in the break room, (20 x 20 feet), and standing or sitting within 4-5 feet of each other. No one wears a mask. An employee is coughing and goes home later that day sick. All the employees that were within 6 feet are at higher risk, but those on the other side of the room are low risk.
- E. You go to the store, up and down the aisles doing your shopping. You walk past several people and even say hello. You ask someone where something is. You have low risk because you are not close to anyone for very long.

And last why do we wear masks? To protect others from ourselves. If we cough or sneeze, the mask will catch our droplets so not many get out. If you are in open areas, there is no reason to wear a mask. If you are sick, you should stay home. But, if you can't, then wear the mask to protect others from your droplets. Masks do not take the place of social distancing. They are to help when social distancing (6 feet apart) is not possible.

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