



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May 2020

### **FITNESS FOCUS**

#### **The Health Benefits of Spring Cleaning**

Spring is here and we have been cooped up inside for the last two months, so ... let's throw open the windows and the garage door and do some spring cleaning!

**HVAC Filters** - The filters on your central heat and/or AC units should be changed every one to six months depending on the quality of the filters and the presence of pets and dander in the house. Changing out the filter not only helps to reduce wear and tear and energy use of your system but it also helps to remove dust, dander, and other allergens from the air. This in turn will decrease allergy and asthma symptoms for the home occupants. Here in Wyoming with our wind and dusty fields...changing the filter is a must 2-3 times a year!

**De-Clutter** - During the winter we tend to pile things away until the "nice weather" returns before we clean up. By decreasing the clutter we can help decrease falls in the elderly and more thoroughly clean up dust and dander to help those persons in our homes who suffer from allergies and asthma. Multiple studies also show that stress levels can be reduced when clutter is reduced. And – bonus! -the act of cleaning increases our motivation and gets us moving.

Finally – and best of all - we have all heard the saying... cleanliness is next to godliness.

:) :) :)

**Ready, set, clean!**

307HEALTH  
250 N. EVARTS STREET  
POWELL, WY 82435  
307HEALTH.ORG

### HEALTH TIP

#### **MASKING PART 1 – FACE COVERINGS IN PUBLIC SPACES**

To wear a mask or not to wear a mask - that is the hot question-of-the-day!  
It can be very confusing when new recommendations are made that do not seem in-line with previous recommendations. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic one did not see many people wearing masks. In fact, the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made the recommendation that the general public did not need to wear face masks. We reflected this thinking in our March *Doctor's Note* where we also stated that the risk of infection from COVID-19 was low in the United States. The thinking behind the CDC's guideline then was that the wearing of a non-N95 mask would not prevent the wearer from infection by the new coronavirus. In hindsight, we now know this recommendation was also made in part to preserve the national inventory of surgical masks for hospitals and other medical facilities.

Much has changed and been learned since then! The biggest piece we have learned is that asymptomatic but infected persons can unknowingly and actively "shed" (spread) the highly contagious coronavirus. Cloth face coverings are now universally recommended by the CDC for anyone who can not be assured of a 6-foot space in public settings, especially in areas experiencing an active COVID-19 outbreak or where mitigation measures are being taken to prevent an outbreak.

There are a number of reasons for this new guideline – to learn more about how cloth face coverings protect our communities, [VISIT HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

### DOCTOR'S NOTE

#### **KEEPING CORONAVIRUS IN PERSPECTIVE – PART 2**

By Dr. Tracy

In the March newsletter, I wrote that "coverage of Covid-19 currently dominates news and social media bandwidth." This continues to be the case. Since March, a lot has happened!

In the March *Doctor's Note* I stated, "There are less than 100 cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. as of February 29<sup>th</sup>, but that number is likely to grow." Eight weeks later as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, Wyoming has identified 420 lab positive cases and 126 probable cases of COVID-19. That rate of infection translates to about 1 in 1,000 people, but that rate is based on a very limited sample size as not many of us have been tested.

As of May 1, the United States has identified 1.13 million cases of COVID-19. The first COVID-19-related death in the country occurred in February; eight weeks later there have been 65,435 reported COVID-19-related deaths. Our take-away based on this number is that those who predicted influenza would kill more Americans than COVID-19 were wrong. More people will die of coronavirus-related causes than influenza in the United States in this flu season over a much shorter period of time. The disease COVID-19 is very real and – thankfully - not something that has affected the Bighorn Basin death rates as of the writing of this newsletter.

But – as evidenced by the changes in the past eight weeks – past results do not guarantee future performance. We encourage our community to stay vigilant in practicing the personal protection measures recommended by the Health Department.

**BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.**

**PRACTICE NEWS**



**MASKING PART 2 - FACE MASKS IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS**

For a while in the days ahead, face masks (source control) will be a common sight at 307Health as we resume more usual clinic operations. On April 13, the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its recommendations for the universal wearing of face masks in healthcare facilities. To read the full update for healthcare facilities [VISIT HERE](#).

Specifically, as they relate to 307Health, the updated CDC guidelines recommend ...

- “To address asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission, implement source control for everyone entering a healthcare facility (e.g., healthcare personnel (HCP), patients, visitors), regardless of symptoms.”

AND

- “As part of source control efforts, HCPs should wear a facemask at all times while they are in the healthcare facility. When available, facemasks are generally preferred over cloth face coverings for HCPs as facemasks offer both source control and protection for the wearer against exposure to splashes and sprays of infectious material from others.”

We all must do our part to mitigate virus spread and protect one another. Please help us follow the CDC guidelines – both in the public spaces you frequent by wearing a cloth face covering - and when visiting 307Health by reminding us to don our mask if we are not wearing one when you come into the office.

**FREE CLOTH FACE COVERINGS**

Individually packaged homemade cloth face coverings have been donated to 307Health. These coverings are free for the asking while supplies last.



**MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS**

**ANTIBODY TESTING FOR COVID-19**

Most testing done for SARS CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, has involved testing for the virus itself through a process called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Another type of test now being offered to healthcare providers is serology (blood draw) testing for the antibodies in a person's blood that develop in response to the virus.

There are two types of antibodies these tests look for in a person's blood. IgM antibodies occur first in an infected person. If a patient tests positive for IgM antibodies, this indicates that a current infection is occurring or that a very recent infection has resolved. IgG antibodies occur weeks later after an infection has resolved. If a patient tests positive for IgG antibodies, this indicates a past infection has resolved.

Antibody testing might be useful for the following two reasons ....

- 1) measuring the extent of the pandemic in a population, and
- 2) measuring whether an individual has evidence of a past or more recent infection.

Serology antibody testing is a rapidly expanding field with many source companies developing this type of point-of-care antibody testing as the medical community maps out how it might provide useful information for patients, employers, and communities.

Stay tuned.

**FREE CLOTH FACE COVERINGS**

Individually packaged homemade cloth face coverings have been donated to 307Health. These coverings are free for the asking while supplies last.

**VOLUNTEERS MAKE FACE MASKS**

**FINDING NEW PURPOSE IN AN EPIDEMIC**

The proverb which teaches that “necessity is the mother of invention” has proven true once again as an army of seamstresses in Wyoming's Big Horn Basin have pooled their talents and time in the making and donating of cloth face masks over the past few weeks.

According to this April 23 Powell Tribune article [HERE](#) on the volunteer effort, thousands of cloth face masks have been made in the past weeks. Many have been donated to healthcare facilities and to the general community.

The CDC recommends wearing a cloth face covering in public places where it is difficult to stay away from other people such as in pharmacies and grocery stores. That said, the Wyoming state health officer Dr. Alexia Harrist cautions that “wearing a face covering is absolutely not a substitute for social distancing, which remains important to slowing the spread of this virus.”

Melissa Cook of Burlington says, “Wearing a mask not only protects you, it is a gift to those around you.”

Marla Isabell is coordinating the community's mask sewing efforts on behalf of the Park County Department of Public Health. Isabell notes that “elastic is in really short supply; some women have already exhausted their fabric stashes ... but by doing it [making masks] together we're able to trade, share resources, different ideas ... but also we know all the [resource] needs.”

The donated cloth masks are free. Public distribution points have included the Wapiti post office and Cody grocery stores.

**HOLIDAY NOTICE**

The 307Health clinic will be closed Monday, May 25, in recognition of Memorial Day.