

July 8, 2020



If you're young you probably think your risk of catching COVID-19 and having serious problems is low, so you are starting to go out with friends again. But the truth is starkly different.

- A **quarter** of COVID-19 cases are in teenagers and young adults in North Carolina.
- If you are young, you may have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all and not feel very ill.
 - If you have underlying conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease or obesity, you are likely to have a worse outcome if you catch COVID-19, irrespective of age.
 - Children can develop a serious condition called MIS-C, a multi-system inflammatory condition often affecting the heart that can emerge weeks after they were infected.
- The coronavirus can be spread by those with mild or no symptoms. If you are infected you could spread it to family members, like parents and grand-parents, who are older and so at higher risk of having serious disease, having to be hospitalized, go on a ventilator and possibly dying.
- Keep yourself healthy by:
 - Choosing outdoor activities
 - Be socially distant
 - Wear a mask - to protect others more than yourself
 - when you are indoors, in any space that is not your home, **even if you are physically distancing**
 - any time you are outside your home, but especially when you can't remain 6 feet away from others
 - Wash your hands/use hand sanitizer frequently
 - Get tested if you've been in a large outdoor group (more than 25 people)
- The goal is to keep yourself healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19 to loved ones. Although young people can have serious complications from COVID-19 infection, they can also lead by example and help reduce the threat of this serious disease.

What are the facts about COVID-19 Cases in Younger Adults and Teenagers?

The number of new daily cases in NC, which was around 1,000 per day at the beginning of June, is now closer to 2000 per day. Hospitalizations now approaching 1000 per day.

In North Carolina, 45% of cases are in people 25-49 years old and 25% are in people under 25 years old. In Pamlico County, where we have had 25 cases at the time of writing, 30% are aged 25-49 and 17% are under

25. Craven County now has over 390 cases and 39% of those are in the 25-49 age group, 35% are under 25 years old, with a staggering 21% being under 18 years of age. One out of every 20 deaths have occurred in people aged 25-49.

But isn't the infection less of a problem if I am a teenager or young adult?

If you are young, you may have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all and not feel very ill. However, if you have underlying conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease or obesity, you are likely to have a worse outcome if you catch COVID-19. For some children, the consequences of catching COVID-19 can be catastrophic if they develop multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C). This involves persistent fever, fatigue, and a variety of signs and symptoms including multiorgan involvement, especially the heart. Children may never have shown the expected symptoms of COVID-19 but then develop MIS-C.

Being infected will stop you from working and doing the things that you enjoy. Click here to read the story of two pro basket ball stars who have just announced they are infected with COVID-19

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/us-pro-basketball-stars-test-positive-covid-19>.

What risk do I pose to others if I catch COVID-19?

There is increasing evidence that the coronavirus is being spread by people who are not showing symptoms, or have very mild symptoms, and who may not feel ill. People over 50 are your parents, grand-parents, aunts, and uncles. If you have COVID-19, even if you have mild or no symptoms, you have the potential to spread the disease to older members of your family, who are at much greater risk.

So, what should I do?

Choose your company wisely. Go out with friends who wear masks (and wear one yourself), respect social distancing and hang out with those you know are only mixing with a small circle of people. Avoid those who have attended mass gatherings recently. Don't share eating utensils, cups or glasses and don't share plates of food. In this way you can help reduce the threat of this serious disease.

Be a leader: help fight the COVID-19 pandemic!

Resources

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/north-carolina-coronavirus-cases.html>

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/cases>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/us/coronavirus-cases-young-people.html?referringSource=articleShare>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/health/coronavirus-young-people.html?referringSource=articleShare>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/pediatric-hcp.html>

<https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO147-Phase-2-Extension.pdf>

The COVID-19 Community Task Force (CCTF) is a volunteer organization established to engage the community in responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic and to support and augment the County's efforts. The information shared by the CCTF is not an official communication from Pamlico County, its Health Department or the Pamlico County COVID19 Task Force.