The “Zones” of Yuma County during COVID

You may have seen information posted recently from our local agencies stating we are in the “Green Zone.” What does that mean? Who determines the “Zone” we are in?

These Zones are used to communicate to the public the level of illness in our community. How we determine how long someone should stay home from work or school and what symptoms are significant is determined by our level of illness in our community. This format allows us to respond appropriately as a community to the level of illness in OUR community, rather than the illness levels in the Front Range. These criteria are based on algorithms developed by the Colorado Department of Public Health. It has been approved by the Northeast Colorado Health Department and the Wray Hospital. Bottom line, the most important message we can send is if you don’t feel well and think you may be contagious, stay home.

The levels are based on established criteria for the “Protect Our Neighbor” phase in order to remain in the Green Zone. As a County, we must remain at 7 or fewer active cases of COVID in Yuma County Residents to remain “Green”. Weekly, our task force reviews our numbers with the Health Department. We take into consideration where the cases are and if they are confined to an institution or considered community spread. The team determines if we will remain in the Green Zone or need to move to Yellow or Red.

Symptoms Defined: The symptoms of COVID have been separated into ‘MAJOR’ or ‘MINOR’. When community levels of COVID illness are low (Green Zone) we want you to focus more on the major symptoms (new onset cough, fever over 100.4, loss of taste or smell, and shortness of breath). When we have higher levels of COVID in the community (Yellow or Red Zone), we need you to be more aware of all symptoms, ‘Major’ (as listed above) and ‘Minor’ (sore throat, runny nose/congestion, body aches, headaches, fatigue, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea). These symptoms will be used in the explanations of the Zones below.

It is important to understand that this information is to assist our community to determine and properly respond to their symptoms at home. A doctor can diagnose your condition and determine more precisely how to safely respond to the symptoms you have. However, not everyone wants or needs to go to the doctor for every symptom they have. Therefore, we ask that you use the information and chart provided to help guide you. Schools and businesses are encouraged to use this guide to help decide how long a student or employee should stay home from work or school.

GREEN Zone: During Green Zone, there is a very low level of illness and therefore, we can assume less opportunity for exposure. If you have one or more ‘Major’ symptom, you should stay home at least two days (the day you started having symptoms and the following day) AND you must be fever free without using fever reducing medications AND your symptoms must be resolved before you return to work or school. If your symptoms continue to linger or worsen, we always recommend you see your primary care provider.

YELLOW Zone: When in the Yellow Zone, there is an increased level of community spread, and therefore, there is some concern about potential exposure to COVID for all residents. We encourage everyone to take extra precautions for their safety when in the Yellow or Red Zones. If you have a ‘Major’ or “Minor” symptom, you should stay home at least the day you began experiencing symptoms
AND TWO additional days AND you must be fever free without use of fever reducing medications AND if it was a ‘Major’ symptom – have a negative test or stay out a total of 10 days OR if it was ‘Minor’ symptoms only – symptoms must be resolved prior to returning.

**RED Zone:** When in the Red Zone, we will follow the same return to work rules as the Yellow Zone. Businesses should consider allowing staff who are able to work from home to do so. Schools will provide online education during this time until the community moves back into the Yellow or Green Zones.

**Those who test Positive:** You must stay home for minimum of 10 days from start of symptoms AND you must be fever free without use of fever reducing medications AND your symptoms must be improving before you go back to school or work. It is NOT recommended you retest after a positive result.

**Those who are exposed:** If you are exposed to a KNOWN COVID POSITIVE (not just someone with symptoms) you must quarantine for 14 days.

The Wray Community District Hospital encourages the use of this guide for both businesses and schools as you determine how to treat your symptoms. We also encourage the community to visit their primary care provider if you are concerned about your health at any time. It is important to understand this is how to assess your risk and response to COVID. You still need to treat ‘Minor’ symptoms appropriately by staying home when you do not feel well to decrease exposure to others. Please do not go into other public locations such as the grocery store or other facilities when you do not feel well. In order to assist our community to navigate this coming fall, when illness levels naturally rise, we are offering several contacts to assist you if you have questions about how to use this guide.

Pediatric Triage/Care Manager: 970-630-1765 Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm

Spanish Speaking Triage/Care Manager: 970-630-2505; Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm

Triage for all others: 970-332-2310; Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm

If you need an appointment, please call 970-332-4895

*This chart is also being translated into Spanish for schools and businesses*

For all emergencies, please call 911.