



Health Officer

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Elkhart County Health Department

June 23, 2020

As research on the new coronavirus continues, more information is gathered. I want to make sure you are kept up-to-date on the latest results. Scientists are always learning new things, which help us treat sick patients more effectively and hopefully lead to an effective vaccine.

After believing children and adolescents were less likely to get infected, we started seeing Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome of Childhood (MIS-C). It is associated with COVID-19 infection, but we aren't yet sure why some children get this, and others don't. It presents with persistent fever and inflammation, some features of another disease (Kawasaki disease), and shock with myocardial involvement. The median age in these patients was nine years old, and in most (82%), the initial presentation was with gastrointestinal symptoms. (Whittaker, E et al. JAMA June 8, 2020, and Cheung, EW et al. JAMA June 8, 2020)

School closures, sheltering at home and isolating from peers, extended family, teachers, and others have lead to high levels of loneliness in adolescents. According to ME Loades, in the Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, June 2, 2020. Associations were found between loneliness and suicidal ideation, self-harm, and disordered eating behaviors. Find more information at Be well Indiana with advice and videos to help.

June 13, 2020, Lancet article by Zhu F-C et al., published the first study on safety and immunogenicity of a COVID-19 vaccine in humans. Although still in very early stages of development, it did appear to be immunogenic and demonstrated a rise in neutralizing antibodies. Many questions remain to be answered before this can be considered as hopeful as we would like, but many scientists are working very hard to get a vaccine as quickly as possible.

A group of scientists studied the infection on the cruise ship Diamond Princess and noted that 58% of the infected persons were asymptomatic at the time of testing. Of those, the majority remained asymptomatic throughout the infection, which was considered to be resolved when the person had two negative PCR tests. (Natural History of asymptomatic SAR-CoV-2 infection. A. Sakurai et al., NEJM.org, June 12, 2020).

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