



Media Release

For immediate release

June 16, 2020

Free Drive-thru COVID-19 Testing

- WHO:** RiverStone Health
- WHAT:** Free COVID-19 drive-thru testing
- WHEN:** Saturday, June 20, 9 a.m. to noon
- WHERE:** MetraPark, upper parking lot

Billings, MT – On Saturday, June 20 from 9 a.m. until noon, RiverStone Health is providing free drive-thru COVID-19 testing in the MetraPark upper parking lot. You do not need a doctor's order to participate in the testing event and only people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 will be tested.

“Like many communities across the state, we are undertaking public asymptomatic testing as a part of Gov. Steve Bullock’s reopening plan for Montana,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County Health Officer and President & CEO of RiverStone Health. “Because some people who have COVID-19 do not have symptoms, and the disease spreads rapidly, this testing is important to help us prevent community spread of the disease.”

People who have participated in recent public rallies, large gatherings or events, traveled outside of the county or Montana, or who have been around others when physical distancing was challenging are encouraged to participate in the free COVID-19 testing event.

The test for COVID-19 is easy and painless. People being tested will remain in their vehicles and be asked to swirl a Q-tip-like swab about an inch into each nostril of their nose. Everyone in a vehicle can be tested if they do not have symptoms like cough, fever, or shortness of breath. See the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for a full list of symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

The test being conducted only indicates if an individual currently has the virus, not if someone may have previously had the virus. Test results are expected within two weeks and RiverStone Health will notify Yellowstone County residents of their test results.

Felton said, “As with many communities that are testing people without COVID-19 symptoms, we expect the majority of people to have a negative test result. However, a negative test result should not change behavior with regard to physical distancing and wearing a mask in public, since the test results are a moment in time snapshot. The virus is still circulating and we must remain vigilant in protecting our community.”

Felton went on to say, “Should someone test positive at the community testing event, they will be considered ‘presumptively positive’ and be asked to isolate, and their household and close contacts will be asked to quarantined, until results from a second confirmation test are known.”

Find more information about the community COVID-19 testing event, including a consent form, at <https://riverstonehealth.org/public-health-preventing-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus/free-drive-thru-covid-19-testing/>. Additionally, completing and bringing the consent form with you to the testing event will help aid in the testing process.

Call the RiverStone Health public health information line at 406.651.6425 for more information about the testing event.

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