



Media Information:

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Yellowstone County reports three July COVID-19 deaths

Billings, MT – Yellowstone County has lost 573 residents to COVID-19 since April 2020, including three people who died in July.

In the latest reports, all victims had underlying health conditions that put them at high risk for severe illness. They include:

- A woman in her 80s who died on July 27 at a Billings hospital. She had been vaccinated.
- A woman in her 70s who died on July 26 at a Billings hospital. She had not been vaccinated.
- A man in his 70s who died on July 17 at a Billings hospital. He had not been vaccinated.

During the month of July, Billings hospitals had a daily average of 21 COVID-19 patients, including an average of two patients in ICU and one patient who was on a ventilator.

Although the COVID-19 variants circulating in the United States this summer are more contagious than the original virus, the latest data indicates that vaccines remain highly effective in preventing serious illness requiring hospitalization. People age 18 and older who had not been vaccinated against COVID-19 were 4.6 times more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-associated illness in the month of June, compared with people who had received all recommended doses of vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Among adults age 65 and older, those who had not been vaccinated were 6.3 times more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 illness than those who had received all the recommended doses of vaccine.

Yellowstone County reported an average of 47 new cases of COVID-19 every day during the last week of July. That number was down from a daily average of 57 new cases in the previous week.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists Yellowstone County as high-risk for COVID-19 transmission and recommends these precautions:

- Stay up to date on vaccines.
- Wear a mask indoors in public and on public transportation, such as buses and planes.

- Get tested if you have symptoms. Free at-home COVID-19 tests are available weekdays in the lobby of the four-story RiverStone Health building at 123 S. 27th St.
- If you are at high risk for severe illness, consider taking additional precautions, such as avoiding crowds.

Free COVID-19 vaccinations for everyone age six months and older are available by appointment at RiverStone Health Immunization Clinic at 406.247.3382.

If you test positive for COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider immediately. You may be eligible for prescription medications that must be started soon after a positive test to be effective. For more information on COVID-19, visit covid.riverstonehealth.org.

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