FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Kristy Fryman, Emergency Response Coordinator/Health District Public Information Officer
Phone: 419-586-3251, ext. 1286
Email: kfryman@mchdohio.org

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
No cases in Ohio

CELINA- As of March 4, 2020, there are 80 confirmed cases, 9 deaths, and 13 states reporting cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the United States. In Ohio, there are no confirmed cases and 1 person under investigation. The current risk to the U.S. general public is low; however, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises all Americans to prepare for the possibility of a COVID-19 outbreak in their communities.

Symptoms, which generally appear two to 14 days after exposure, include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Most people who become sick do not require hospitalization, but older adults, people with chronic health conditions, and people with compromised immune systems are more likely to require more advanced care.

The Mercer County Health District (MCHD) is closely monitoring the situation and has been participating in conference calls with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the CDC. The MCHD continues to be prepared for a local increase in disease by exercising our plans and policies. “MCHD is prepared and we encourage citizens to get prepared instead of being scared,” says our Epidemiologist, Deb Scheer.

Citizens can be prepared by creating a household plan of action. Ensure you have a good supply of soaps, hand sanitizers, medicines, foods, etc. on hand. Each family should stock up on items essential to their needs. Businesses can prepare by reviewing your plans and start thinking of ways to provide flexible scheduling, telework if that’s an option.

Although influenza viruses and COVID-19 have similar symptoms, the risk of catching the flu in the United States is far greater. Because both diseases are spread via respiratory droplets, the following precautions will help to protect against both:

- Frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a health care professional) and avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Information on COVID-19 continues to rapidly change, please visit CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 & ODH COVID-19 for the latest information.

If you have any questions, please contact the Mercer County Health District at 419-586-3251.

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