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Cc:	Jessica Dale; Jennifer Little; healthDeptStaff
Subject:	News release: Protect yourself from germs and viruses
Date:	Wednesday, February 26, 2020 5:15:00 PM
Attachments:	handwashing is a healthy habit.jpg image001.png

Klamath County Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2020
Contact: Valeree Lane, vlane@klamathcounty.org, 541.882.4486

Protect yourself from germs and viruses

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – February is often the height of the flu season, but this month has brought awareness of another virus: Corona, known formally as COVID-19.

"With the CDC's recent announcement that it is only a matter of time before the virus reaches substantial numbers in the United States, many people are worried and concerned," said Dr. Wendy Warren, health officer for Klamath County Public Health.

She stressed that there is no immediate risk of this new virus to the American public. The threat is believed to be low at this time, and everyone can do their part to help respond in a reasonable and rational manner.

"The best way to prevent the flu is to get the vaccine," Warren said. "Also simple actions, such as washing your hands, covering a cough or sneeze, or staying home when you don't feel well helps prevent the spread of flu and other viruses."

She noted that someone who believes they have the flu, or another virus, should call before going to a clinic or urgent care setting. "When people who are contagious arrive somewhere, it increases the chance that someone else will become sick, too."

Flu symptoms are much like those of the common cold, but also include a fever and severe body aches. The Oregon Health Authority is providing weekly numbers updates related to COVID-19.

Warren reiterated, "We recognize people are very worried about COVID-19. There still are no cases of COVID-19 in Oregon. Because there are no cases, risk to the public remains low."

If a person under investigation tests positive for COVID-19, the Oregon Health Authority will notify the public through a statewide press release along with the person's region of residence.

"I know Public Health is in contact with OHA daily to check in on where Oregon stands in the response to Corona virus," Warren said. "They are here to ensure the health and safety of the

community and will continue to update everyone as information becomes available."

There are everyday actions people can take to prevent the spread of many respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19 and influenza:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are often touched.
- Consult CDC travel website for any travel advisories and steps to protect yourself if you plan to travel outside of the USA.
- Take care of your overall health. Staying current on your vaccinations, including flu vaccine, eating well and exercising all help your body stay resilient.

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