



CLAYTON COUNTY

Board of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19: Keeping Your Circle Small

By Dr. Michele Dikkers, Chair of Clayton County Board of Health

“So, if my child is in daycare and both of us work outside the home and around others, do we have to social distance when we aren’t at work?”

“If we can go to the mall, why can’t we gather in groups of more than 10?”

Fair questions, which provoke answers that aren’t as difficult as they may seem once we break them down.

Let’s start with a fact that we hear frequently... “80% of the cases are mild and may not even show symptoms”...

And that’s the point, isn’t it? 80% of those infected may not know it. If you are part of that 80% and you aren’t aware that you are infected, how will you know to avoid situations where you may spread the infection to others, to those who could be the 20% who could become seriously ill or even die?

Social distancing is the answer. Wearing masks is also part of the answer.

Social distancing decreases the risk of spreading the virus to others. The fewer contacts you have in a day, the less the risk you have of exposure to the virus. There are contacts you have to have every day and can’t avoid, like work. And there are contacts that you can avoid. There are ways to manage those contacts. I like to call it “keeping your circle small”. The more people you include, the larger your circle becomes, bringing in risks from others’ “circles” and maybe even other communities.

There are essential and nonessential parts to our life. Food, clothing, necessities of life are essentials. Social, recreational and leisure events are considered nonessential.

Shopping for food and essentials for everyday life explain the need for grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants and malls to be opened and accessible to us. Concerts, festivals, sporting events and celebrations fall under nonessential activities.

Some of us may feel that social activities are essential, and some of them may be. We are social creatures and we do need to interact with each other, but in groups of ten or less.

So, when it seems difficult to navigate the guidelines, try breaking it down into whether or not what you want to do is considered essential or nonessential. Social distancing and keeping your “circle” small will decrease your risk of contact with the “80%” with mild symptoms.

Remember, social distancing, washing your hands and wearing masks are the only tools we have to protect ourselves, those we love and each other, from this virus.

We are in this together.