



**STAR VALLEY  
HEALTH**

**Star Valley Health**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Afton, WY** – As of 10:00 a.m. April, 2, 2020 there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lincoln County, WY. Star Valley Health has tested 36 patients for COVID-19 with 29 negative test results received and 7 test results pending.

Star Valley Health has been following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding who should be tested. Due to the global shortage of testing supplies not all people showing symptoms for COVID-19 are tested. Those patients who have presented to Star Valley Health facilities and do not meet the CDC testing criteria are provided educational information and asked to self-quarantine. Star Valley Health medical staff follow up regularly with those quarantined to monitor their illness.

Star Valley Health has received additional testing supplies from the State of Wyoming on Friday March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. For the time being we will be testing all symptomatic patients in addition to these high priority groups:

- Those that are severely ill and/or at major risk of serious illness
- Long term care residents
- Healthcare workers
- First responders
- Critical infrastructure workers

Symptomatic is defined as fever and one of these other symptoms:

- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Body aches

Testing will expand or contract based on the availability of testing supplies. Tests are sent to the Wyoming Public Health Laboratory in Cheyenne. We have the ability to conduct COVID-19 testing in Afton however Star Valley Health, like the majority of hospitals throughout Wyoming,

cannot get the necessary lab reagent to run the test in house as they are in short supply nationally.

If a Lincoln County resident is tested for COVID-19 at a health care facility outside the county, Lincoln County we will be notified. The CDC has directed that the public health agency of county residency be contacted to register the confirmed case and to conduct an investigation to help mitigate the spread of the disease.

### **Mitigation Efforts**

Star Valley Health recognizes the importance of mitigation efforts (social distancing, avoiding discretionary travel and washing hands). Star Valley Health has 22 hospital beds. Mitigation efforts slow the virus so patients that require hospitalization occur over months instead of weeks. It is a low percentage of patients that require a high level of inpatient care such as an intensive care unit (ICU) or ventilation. Rural hospitals typically transfer patients needing this higher level of care to partner hospitals with more resources. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Star Valley Health is ready to care for patients needing a higher level of care as our referral partner hospitals may become overrun with other patients and not accepting patients from outside their area. As healthcare professionals, mitigation efforts buy us time to provide the proper care needed to patients.

### **Communication**

Star Valley Health feels that knowledge is key. Please follow us on social media or visit our website, [www.starvalleyhealth.org](http://www.starvalleyhealth.org), for up to date information you will need to know if you require local care. If you are feeling ill or have general questions you may call our COVID-19 live hotline, 307-885-5008, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily. We also have a recorded informational line, 307-885-5007, available 24 hours a day. Our clinics are scheduling patient visits via telehealth or phone so you don't have to leave the house. If you choose to visit one of our clinics we ask that you please call ahead so that staff are best prepared for to care for your symptoms.

### **Additional Resources:**

Star Valley Health – [www.starvalleyhealth.org](http://www.starvalleyhealth.org)

Lincoln County Public Health – [www.lcwy.org/departments/public\\_health](http://www.lcwy.org/departments/public_health)

Wyoming Department of Health – [www.health.wyo.gov](http://www.health.wyo.gov)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

For additional information, contact:

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