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Several Covid-19 Hospitalizations Reported by DOH; One Patient on Ventilator

Health officials urge continued vigilance and preventative measures as cases rise amid influx of summer visitors

Health / **Published On June 28, 2024 06:29 AM /**

Staff Consortium **June 28, 2024**

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The V.I. Department of Health has reported new Covid-19 hospitalizations from both of the territory's hospitals, underscoring the ongoing presence of the virus as the region experiences an influx of summer visitors.

The Juan F. Luis Hospital on St. Croix reported three hospitalizations, with one patient on a ventilator. Meanwhile, the Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas reported six hospitalizations, with none on ventilation.

Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion emphasized the continued threat of Covid-19, stating, "Covid-19 is still with us, and it remains a deadly virus." She urged the public to get vaccinated, practice good hygiene, and consider wearing masks in public places. Encarnacion highlighted that older adults and individuals with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe illness.

The commissioner advised those feeling unwell or suspecting Covid-19 to avoid close contact with vulnerable individuals and to wear a mask. Dr. Tai Hunte-Ceasar, chief medical officer at DOH, reinforced the importance of testing, saying, "If you feel you have Covid-19, get tested immediately."

Covid-19 spreads through droplets and particles exhaled by an infected person. Symptoms can include fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, congestion, nausea, and diarrhea.

The Department of Health offers the Covid vaccine at no cost to uninsured and underinsured individuals. On St. Croix, vaccinations are available from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday through Thursday, at the Department of Health's clinic in the Old Caribe Home Center building. On St. Thomas, adults can get vaccinated from 9 a.m. to noon, Monday through Thursday, at the Community Health Clinic at Schneider Regional Medical Center.

For the flu vaccine, appointments can be made by calling (340) 774-7477. Children's vaccinations are available at the Maternal Child Health clinic. On St. John, residents can call the Morris De Castro Clinic at (340) 776-6400 for vaccination information.

DOH said it is working to provide the Covid-19 vaccine for insured individuals by July. Until then, insured individuals are advised to visit their private provider or an urgent care facility for vaccination.

For more information about Covid-19, visit [VI Department of Health's website](#).