

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID Cases On The Rise

VALDOSTA - With COVID cases on the rise across our region, the Georgia Department of Public Health's South Health District wants to encourage all eligible individuals who have not been vaccinated to do so.

Within the 10 counties that South Health District serves (Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift and Turner) 693 new cases were reported from July 21-July 28, more than doubling the previous seven days (July 15-22) when 275 new cases were reported.

Vaccination continues to be the most important step that individuals can take to protect themselves and others from COVID-19 as well as the new COVID-19 variants. Data has shown that vaccinations currently available under the Food and Drug Administration's Emergency Use Authorization do offer some protection against the new variants.

"Anyone who is unvaccinated is at risk of contracting and getting seriously ill from COVID-19," said District Health Director Dr. William Grow, MD, FACP. "We know that, with the Delta variant becoming more prevalent, younger populations are more at risk of serious illness than with the original virus strain. Now is the time to get vaccinated so that we can slow this surge. Don't wait until it is too late."

Nearly 60% of Georgians are not fully vaccinated, and that number is much higher in some of the counties South Health District serves. As new cases increase and hospitalization rates rise, it is more important than ever that anyone who has not been vaccinated get vaccinated.

In addition to vaccination, South Health District continues to encourage everyone to practice other mitigation steps including mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing and avoiding crowded settings.

Overcoming COVID and returning to normal life can only happen if everyone works together.

Contact your local health department today to schedule a vaccination appointment.

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 or to schedule an appointment for testing, visit southhealthdistrict.com/covid19 and like South Health District on Facebook.