



**Loup Basin**  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**First Detection of UK Variant B.1.1.7 of COVID-19 Coronavirus in the Health District.**

Burwell, NE- Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) has received notification that an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 has tested positive with the UK variant, B.1.1.7. This is the first variant found within LBPHD's nine counties. The confirmatory and variant testing was performed at the Nebraska Public Health Lab.

The person infected with the variant virus is an adult who resides in Custer county who had recently traveled internationally. To limit exposure, this person stayed home, and self-quarantine as directed by the CDC after international travel. Contact tracing has identified close contacts in the household but no other community exposures were identified. Public health isolation, quarantine and testing guidance was followed. As a result, there is not believed to be risk to the community from this new variant.

"The CDC has estimated that the variant will likely become the predominant circulating variant in the U.S. in the near future." Anybody who experiences new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested. The B.1.1.7 variant was identified due to the increase of specimen sequencing in Nebraska as directed by Nebraska Department of health and Human Services. Studies from the UK has shown that variant B.1.1.7 is greater than 50% more infectious and transmissible. The COVID-19 vaccines have shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19 from this variant.

Loup Basin Public Health Department offers the COVID-19 vaccine on Tuesdays and Fridays. Walk-ins are welcomed or you can call 308-346-5795 to schedule your appointment. - LBPHD offers Moderna (2 dose) and Johnson & Johnson (1 dose) vaccine and anticipates Pfizer vaccine to be available soon.

If you have questions/concerns about a possible exposure, please call LBPHD at 308-346-5795.

For more information from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Infection about new COVID-19 variants, please visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html).