

Arizona health experts call for more COVID-19 testing, as cases continue to rise

JASON BARRY

🕒 POSTED OCT 21, 2020



The president of the Arizona Medical Association says even though our state is seeing a coronavirus surge, we can turn it around with more testing.



PHOENIX (3TV/CBS 5) - Arizona's COVID-19 numbers are headed in the wrong direction, and there are a number of reasons why, according to health experts. They include not enough people wearing masks, kids back in school and not enough social distancing.

Testing is also a problem. Arizona is one of the worst states in the country for COVID-19 testing with about 1.3 tests for every 1,000 people. That's less than half the national average.

Dr. Ross Goldberg is the president of the Arizona Medical Association. He said there are far too many people choosing not to get tested, even if they've come in contact with someone that has COVID-19.

"Even asymptomatic people can be carrying the virus," said Goldberg. "In fact, they are a large spreader of it because you feel great, you go out and about your business not realizing you are spreading the virus."

"It's really important to make sure we know who is symptomatic - who is asymptomatic - who is negative and who is positive," added Goldberg.

Another indicator Arizona is going in the wrong direction is the state's positivity rate, which measures the percent of people who test positive for COVID-19 out of all the people tested.

Arizona's positivity rate is at 7%, the highest it's been since Aug. 2. School districts across the Valley are tracking their own positivity rates as the number of COVID-19 cases start to add up. Several campuses have seen an increase in students testing positive, raising concerns that schools may be

forced to go back to online learning only.

LIST: Phoenix-area school districts alter plans as COVID-19 cases decrease

Dr. Jesse Welsh is the superintendent of the Paradise Valley School District. Welsh said they are still well below the 10% positivity threshold that would stop in-person classes, but they are prepared to make changes if necessary.

"It's really what's best for the safety of everybody," said Welsh. "If we get to a point where cases are that widespread, that's really taking health and safety of the whole community to act, making sure we're keeping everybody safe. If that's what we have to do, that's what we'll do."



COVID-19 vaccines: What trials are not testing

If a COVID-19 vaccine is approved, it may not do what you would expect.

*Jason Barry is best known for his **Dirty Dining Report** which airs Fridays at 6:30 p.m. on CBS 5. He is also the storyteller behind CBS 5's **Pay It Forward** which airs every Thursday at 6:30 p.m.*