

NORTH TEXAS MEDICAL SOCIETY COALITION



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORTH TEXAS PHYSICIANS ENCOURAGE PHYSICIAN ADVISORS AND THREE STEP SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR LARGE GATHERINGS

Dallas, June 4, 2020 - The North Texas Medical Society Coalition (NTMSC) is encouraging individuals participating in large events such as religious services, graduation celebrations, and civic protests, to use a self-assessment process to reduce their COVID-19 risk. They are also calling on leaders in the community to mitigate risks as much as possible by seeking advice of local physicians on the best practices for supporting individual wellbeing and ensuring these important activities can continue.

"I have sung in church and community choirs most of my life. There are few activities I find more rewarding than making music with fellow singers. Choral music is an integral component of traditional worship services," says Robert Rogers, MD, of Fort Worth. "Despite my love of choral music and group singing, as a physician, I strongly recommend that all choirs – religious, community, or professional – refrain from traditional group choir activities until the risk of community transmission of coronavirus is much lower. I encourage faith leaders to find innovative ways to share worship music with their congregations that does not involve large groups gathering closely together."

Community and faith leaders are encouraged to consult physicians in their congregations when addressing issues such as safe seating, avoiding close contact among attendees, and alternative worship settings. An example of this would be using a prerecorded choral performance in lieu of a live choir. The critical thing is to avoid COVID-19 incubation at any large group gathering. Just one individual who is COVID-19 positive could quickly spread the infection throughout the community.

When considering attending a large gathering during COVID-19, here are three things to think about and prepare for:

- Risk category - Individuals need to assess their level of risk before attending an event. They should determine if it is advisable to attend due to their age or other existing health conditions that place them at higher risk. Some of the top concerns are being over the age of 65 or having chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease.
- Prepare to physically distance - Wearing a mask, washing hands, and maintaining six feet of space from others will help individuals protect themselves from the increased spread that often occurs from large events.
- Scrub down - After attending a large event, individuals should immediately change their clothes and wash their hands and face.

The rate of infection from COVID-19 is very high in North Texas. Statistics from the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council, which covers 21 North Texas counties, shows that hospital admissions are on the rise and ICU capacity is at approximately 65% for COVID-19 related illness. Any significant additional outbreak, such as one from a large group gathering, could lead to concerns about some local healthcare systems being unable to care for all individuals who are ill.

About North Texas Medical Society Coalition:

The NTMSC represents more than 11,500 physicians in the communities of Collin-Fannin, Dallas, Denton, Grayson, and Tarrant County. Founded in 2020, the NTMSC works with community healthcare partners, including public

health departments, hospitals, and business leaders, to advise on medical recommendations to serve the healthcare needs of the residents of North Texas.

www.northtexasmc.org

<https://www.facebook.com/NorhtexasMSC/>

<https://twitter.com/NorthTexasMSC>

Contacts:

Pamela Lowery
Dallas County Medical Society
Director of Communications
pamela@dallas-cms.org

Allison Howard
Tarrant County Medical Society
Media and Communications Director
ahoward@tcms.org

###