

## **PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET**

## **Isolation and Quarantine**

Public health officials use many methods to control the spread of infectious disease. Two of these methods are isolation and quarantine. Both methods aim to control exposure to infectious disease.

### **Isolation is for people who are sick with an infectious disease.**

- Isolation separates and restricts the movement of sick people so they can't spread disease to healthy people.
- Isolation is a routine procedure in hospitals and healthcare facilities.
- Isolation allows healthcare professionals to provide specialized medical treatment for sick people in the hospital, in a healthcare facility, or at home.
- Isolation is voluntary, but in a public health emergency, officials have the authority to isolate people who are sick.

### **Quarantine is for people who have been exposed to an infectious disease, but are *not* sick.**

- Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who have been exposed to an infectious agent and may become infectious.
- Quarantined people *may* or *may not* become sick.
- Quarantined people may stay at home so they don't spread disease to healthy people.
- If you are quarantined and you become ill, you can seek medical treatment from a healthcare provider.
- Quarantine is voluntary, but in a public health emergency, officials have the authority to quarantine people who have been exposed to a contagious disease.

### **For More Information Contact**

- Your healthcare provider
- The South Central Public Health District Office (208) 737-5900  
website at [www.phd5.idaho.gov](http://www.phd5.idaho.gov)
- Your local department of health  
[www.panflusouthidaho.org](http://www.panflusouthidaho.org)
- The CDC website at  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/isolationquarantine.htm>