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Renewed fear for COVID-19 spread in Chinatown as Lunar New Year approaches

By Keith Menconi

A year into the pandemic, San Francisco's Chinatown continues to defy the early expectations that it would become an epicenter for COVID-19 spread. But now, local health workers have a renewed sense of urgency.

Despite early fears, the neighborhood maintained among the lowest COVID-19 infection rates of any district in the city.

Dr. Jian Zhang, who heads Chinese Hospital in the heart of the neighborhood, said the low infection numbers are no accident.

"We started educating the community very early on, I think because everybody thought that the pandemic was going to be in Chinatown," Zhang said.

Zhang also said she and her colleagues have worked around the clock since the pandemic began.

Now, with the Lunar New Year holiday just around the corner, state health officials fear family gatherings could increase transmission.

"We're still at very high risk," Zhang said. "It still can happen."

Nevertheless she said she believes all those public health warnings have gotten through to the public.

<https://www.radio.com/kcbsradio/news/local/new-fear-for-covid-19-in-sf-chinatown-due-to-lunar-new-year>