

For immediate release

Flu cases on the rise in Tri-County Area

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If you haven't had the flu by Christmas, its smooth sailing, right? You couldn't be more wrong. Despite the fact that many of us believe this myth, most flu cases come after Christmas and frankly, come after New Years as well. The majority of flu cases occur in the month of February, as you can see by the chart provided below. In nearly half of the last 30 years, flu activity peaked in the shortest month of the year.

What's happening now – well, I'm glad you asked. From October to November, flu cases in Branch, Hillsdale, and St. Joseph Counties rose by 70%, and the numbers are still somewhat low, so hold on tight. Texas and Florida are already reporting the highest levels nationally, but in the past 3 weeks, all sections of the country are now starting to report flu activity.

What can I do? You can still get a flu shot, as many providers', including the Health Department still have plenty of vaccine available. A vaccine will protect you for the rest of this flu season. Remember, a flu shot is your **BEST** protection against getting the flu.

Symptoms of the flu:

- * Fever (usually high),
- * Dry cough, sore throat
- * Muscle aches
- * Headache, extreme tiredness
- * Runny or stuffy nose
- * Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea

If you feel you already have the flu you should:

- * Rest
- * Avoid using alcohol and tobacco
- * Cover your mouth when coughing
- * Drink plenty of fluids
- * If at all possible – stay at home – do not go to work
- * Wash hands frequently

Where to call in Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph Counties for a flu shot?

Branch County 517-279-9561 x 100
Hillsdale County 517-437-7395 x 136
SJ – Sturgis 269-659-4013 x 121
SJ – Three Rivers 269-273-2161 x 208

