



## Branch - Hillsdale - St. Joseph Community Health Agency

570 N. Marshall Road  
Coldwater, MI 49036  
(517) 279-9561  
Fax (517) 278-2923

20 Care Drive  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
(517) 437-7395  
Fax (517) 437-0166  
[www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org)

1110 Hill Street  
Three Rivers, MI 49093  
(269) 273-2161  
Fax (269) 273-2452

"Your Local  
Health Department"

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**February 17, 2017**

**Rebecca Burns, Health Officer**  
517-279-9561, ext. 0148#

**Val Newton, Prevention Services Director**  
517-279-9561, ext. 0143#

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### What to Do About the Flu?

**(Coldwater, MI).** The Michigan Department of Community Health is reporting an uptick in the number of cases of influenza. According to Val Newton, Prevention Services Director, "In Michigan, the flu season typically peaks in February and March, but it's not uncommon to see a surge in January."

Seasonal flu outbreaks occur every year. While vaccination is the best protection against the flu, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency offers the following tips to managing flu and other symptoms if you or your loved one comes down with a nasty bug:

1. *Stay at home and rest.* If a fever is present, stay home for at least 24 hours until the fever is gone except to get medical care. (A fever is defined as temperatures at or above 100°F or 37.8°C. Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
2. *Avoid close contact with well people so that they are not exposed to the flu.*
3. *Drink plenty of water and other clear liquids to prevent fluid loss (dehydration).*
4. *Treat fever and cough with over the counter medications*
5. *Visit your doctor if you or your loved one is very sick or are pregnant or have a medical condition that puts you at higher risk of flu complications (i.e., 65 years and older, young children, and people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease).*
6. *Take an antiviral medicine as directed, if prescribed.*

However, there are times when seeking immediate medical attention may be needed. Call for emergency care or see a doctor right away if the following warning or emergency signs occur:

***In children:***

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

*In addition to the signs above, get medical help right away for **any infant** who has any of these signs:*

- Being unable to eat
- Has trouble breathing
- Has no tears when crying
- Significantly fewer wet diapers than normal

***In adults:***

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by flu viruses. Flu viruses cause illness, may require hospital stays and can cause death. Symptoms of flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Some people sick with the flu may experience all these symptoms, while others may not. Val adds, “Flu spreads from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with flu. People also may get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. That’s why handwashing is such an important measure for stopping the spread of flu. And of course, so is getting your flu shot.”

The health department reminds everyone that it's not too late to get the flu shot. Getting the flu shot can still minimize your chances of coming down with the flu and spreading it to those around you. The flu shot provides protection in just two weeks and that protection lasts for an entire year. This year's flu shot protects against 2 strains of influenza, including H1N1 and 2 strains of influenza B. We also have high-dose flu for those age 65 years and older or who suffer from chronic diseases and are in need of the additional protection. If you still need a flu shot, contact the health department to schedule an appointment. We accept all major insurances. In addition, children who are covered by Medicaid, who are uninsured or lack health insurance coverage for vaccinations, can receive their flu shot free of charge through the Vaccine for Children Program. Call and find out if your child is eligible.

Flu is a serious illness. By following these tips you can reduce the spread of the disease. To learn more about influenza, its symptoms and how to prevent it, check out our website at [www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org) and press the Frequently Asked Questions button.

**###**