



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

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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Your Best Shot is the Flu Shot!**

Influenza, also known as the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat and lungs. Over 30 cases of flu have been diagnosed in the last few weeks in Washtenaw County, almost all young adults. The flu virus can be detected year-round in the United States but the virus is most common during the fall and winter season. The influenza virus can cause mild to severe illness, and at times death, if not treated. The virus is spread mainly by droplets when people with the flu cough, sneeze or talk. Children under the age of 5, adults 65 and older, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems have a high risk of developing flu complications. Symptoms include cough, fever, sore throat, headaches, chills, fatigue, stuffy or runny nose and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea.

The best defense against influenza is to receive an annual influenza vaccine. The flu vaccine causes antibodies to develop in the body two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection with the viruses in the vaccine. The flu vaccine can keep you and others around you from getting the flu. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends everyone

6 months and older get a flu vaccine each year. If you haven't gotten your flu shot, see your doctor or other health care professional to get the flu vaccine. If you come down with the flu, here are some tips to help manage flu-like symptoms:

1. Stay at home and rest. If a fever is present, stay at home for at least 24 hours until the fever is gone except to get medical care.
2. Avoid close contact with well people so they are not exposed to the flu.
3. Drink plenty of water and other clear liquids to prevent fluid loss (dehydration).
4. Treat fever 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 antiviral medicine as directed, if prescribed.

The health department reminds everyone that this is the best time of year 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. We accept all major insurances. 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 Quick Info About Health Topics button. Also, be sure to like our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/bhsj/wic/](https://www.facebook.com/bhsj/wic/).