



COMAL COUNTY

PUBLIC INFORMATION

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Protection against flu also helps protect against new coronavirus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, FEBRUARY 4, 2020:

NEW BRAUNFELS — Residents in Comal County are at much greater risk of contracting flu than the 2019 novel coronavirus that has received plenty of headlines – but the steps they can take are the same to avoid catching either one.

During the week of Jan. 25, Comal County saw more than 500 cases of flu or flu-like illness, the highest total yet during the 2019-20 flu season, and thus far has zero confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China, in December.

Nevertheless, residents worried about either virus can take the following steps to avoid catching and spreading them, according to the Comal County Office of Public Health:

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds;
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth;
- Avoid close contact with sick people;
- Stay inside and limit contact with others when sick;
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze – with your elbow, if possible; and
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces, especially if you are sick.

“We continue to closely monitor the coronavirus situation, which is serious but thus far poses a low risk for Comal County residents,” said Cheryl Fraser, the county’s public health director. “However, at this moment, flu remains a much bigger threat locally, and residents should continue to protect themselves and their loved ones by taking these simple steps – and of course by getting vaccinated, if they haven’t already.”

The Office of Public Health still has a small number of flu vaccines available. The office accepts Medicaid and Community First CHIP for children age 18 and younger, and Blue Cross Blue Shield for all ages. The cost of a shot for someone without insurance coverage is just \$35.

Residents can call 830-221-1150 to make an appointment, but walk-ins are welcome until 4 p.m.

each day. The office is open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m. at 1297 Church Hill Drive, Suite 102, New Braunfels. It also will be open at 7 a.m. the first Friday of each month, beginning this Friday, Feb. 7.

If a Comal County resident or visitor has traveled to China within the past 14 days and is now experiencing fever, coughing or shortness of breath, they should contact their primary care provider immediately to receive instructions for receiving care. For more information on 2019 novel coronavirus, its symptoms and updates on its spread, residents should visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention webpage at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

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