



COMAL COUNTY

PUBLIC INFORMATION

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Public Health continues to monitor COVID-19 developments

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NEW BRAUNFELS — The biggest threat to public health in Comal County remains the influenza virus, but the Office of Public Health is actively monitoring developments and preparing for the possibility that COVID-19 will eventually make its way to the area.

Residents should not be alarmed about the disease, caused by a new strain of coronavirus that first appeared in China in late 2019, but they should continue to take steps to keep themselves protected from the flu and other infectious diseases, said Cheryl Fraser, Comal County director of public health.

“The latest word we’re receiving from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is that it’s not a question of if COVID-19 arrives in our community, but when,” Fraser said. “That doesn’t mean we should panic, but it does mean we should be prepared and plan for its arrival by doing what we can to limit the spread of all infectious diseases.”

The Office of Public Health is meeting regularly with first responders, hospitals, emergency planners and school districts to assess the situation locally and make sure plans are in place, Fraser said.

There are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Comal County, and the steps to avoid catching the virus are the same as what residents should do to protect themselves against the flu.

Those steps include:

- Frequently washing hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds;
- If soap and water are not available, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Refraining from touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
- Avoiding close contact with sick people;
- Staying inside and limiting contact with others when sick;
- Covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze – with your elbow, if possible; and
- Disinfecting commonly touched surfaces, especially if you are sick.

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 from countries identified as at risk by the CDC, and they are 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 COVID-19, its symptoms and updates on its spread, residents should visit the Office of Public Health webpage at www.comalcountytexas.com/health.htm.

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