

INFLUENZA UPDATE IN BRAZOS COUNTY 2017

GENERAL OBSERVATION

There has been an increase in flu activity and flu outbreaks in Health Service Region 7, the state of Texas and the U.S as a whole in the past three months. However, this observation is normal during the flu season (October-March) and the numbers of reported flu cases so far are **NOT unusual or alarming**.

In Brazos County, there has been no flu outbreak to date this season. The numbers of reported flu cases at this point in the flu season are shown below and do not raise any concerns. These numbers do not include cases of Influenza-Like-Illnesses (ILI) which have similar signs and symptoms but are caused by microorganisms other than the Influenza virus.

Reported Flu Cases In Brazos County 2015-2017 Flu Season (Up To December 12)

MONTH	2015	2016	2017
October	105	128	30
November	137	27	184
December 12	56	21	69

VACCINE EFFICACY

The flu vaccine efficacy is averagely 40-60% nationwide. Vaccine Efficacy is usually evaluated after the flu season. Last year, the vaccine efficacy in Texas was 42% overall. (47% against Flu A (H3N2) and 73% against Flu B). The predominant Influenza virus strain this year is Flu A (H3N2). The vaccine efficacy for the current season is expected to be similar to that of the previous year.

PREVENTION

1. **Vaccination** is the most effective method of prevention. The health department highly recommends vaccination to all (especially children, the elderly, Long Term Care Facility residents, and high risk groups).
2. Cough etiquette (Cover your cough).
3. Hand washing.
4. Avoidance of contacts with the sick.
5. If you have the flu: a) Seek early treatment
b) Stay home till fever is gone for 24 hours.
c) Avoid group/public activities.

For any questions and more information, please contact the Brazos County Health Department at **979-361-4440**