

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 7, 2026

Flu Cases on the Rise

Health Officials Urge Vaccination and Prevention

The Grand Traverse County Health Department is alerting residents to a recent increase in influenza (flu) activity across Michigan and is encouraging everyone six months of age and older to get vaccinated to help protect themselves and their communities.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data from December 27th, 2025 and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) **Michigan Flu Focus** report (published January 5, 2026, for the week ending December 27, 2025), **influenza-like illness (ILI) rose to 11.3% of outpatient visits statewide, above the current national level of 8.2% and above Michigan's regional baseline of 2.3%.** In the **Northern** surveillance region, ILI was 10.6% for that same week. Influenza A (H3N2) is currently the most frequently reported virus strain. MDHHS also reports that hospitals statewide recorded **928 influenza-related hospitalizations** during the week ending December 27, with **2110 hospitalizations reported so far this season** (among reporting hospitals).

Seasonal influenza is a contagious respiratory illness that can cause mild to severe illness and, in some cases, lead to hospitalization or death—especially among young children, older adults, pregnant people, and those with chronic health conditions.

“It’s not too late to get the flu vaccine. Vaccination remains the most effective way to reduce the risk of severe illness from influenza,” said Jacalyn Money-Bruno, MPH, RN, Director of Prevention and Community Health **for the Grand Traverse County Health Department**. “The flu vaccine not only helps protect you but also helps reduce the spread of influenza to vulnerable family members, classmates, and coworkers.”

Flu Vaccine Opportunities at Health Department

The Grand Traverse County Health Department (GTCHD)

- Appointments: Call 231-995-6111 to schedule. [Grand Traverse County](https://www.grandtraversecounty.org/)
- Walk-in clinics: GTCHD is hosting a walk-in clinic for flu and COVID vaccine on Monday, January 12, 2026 (8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; closed noon–1:00 p.m.).

Common Flu Symptoms

Flu symptoms often come on suddenly. People with flu may have some or all of the following:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills (not everyone with flu will have a fever)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Vomiting or diarrhea (more common in children than adults)

When to Stay Home

The CDC recommends staying home and away from others when you're sick with flu-like symptoms. You can return to normal activities when **for at least 24 hours** both of the following are true:

- **Your symptoms are improving overall, and**
- **You have not had a fever** (and are **not** using fever-reducing medication).

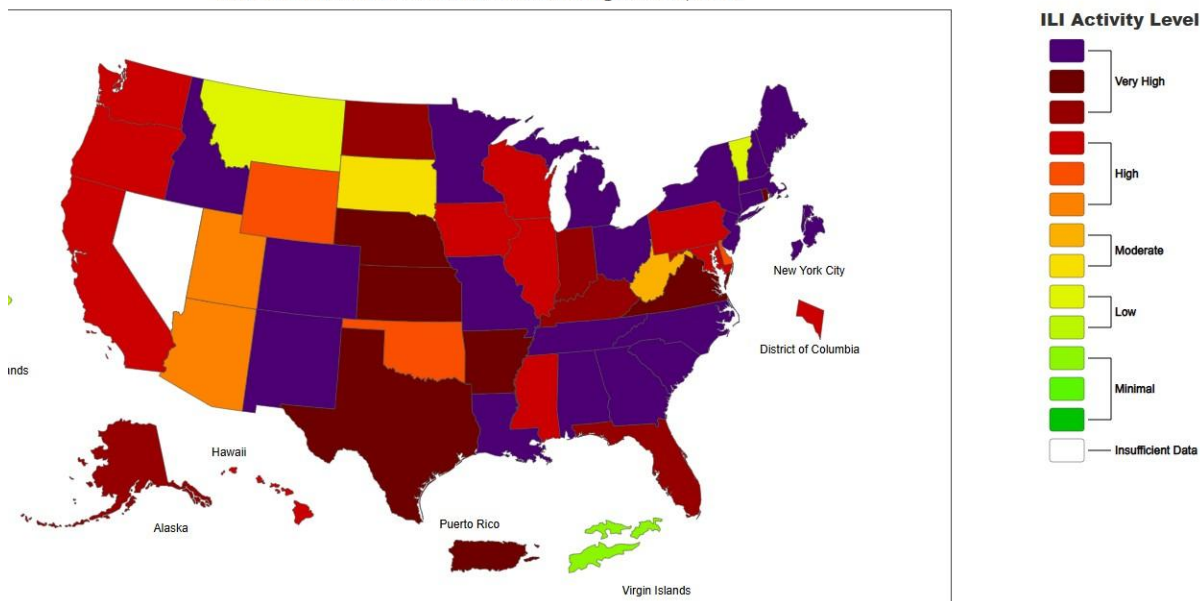
When to Call Your Doctor

Contact a healthcare provider promptly—especially if you or a family member is at **higher risk for flu complications** (including older adults, young children, pregnant people, and those with chronic health conditions).

Seek medical care right away if you or a family member experience:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Persistent dizziness, confusion, or inability to wake/stay awake
- Not urinating / signs of severe dehydration
- Fever or cough that improves but then returns or worsens
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions

2025-26 Influenza Season Week 52 ending Dec 27, 2025



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