

### *HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE VACCINE?*

Flu vaccinations are pretty effective in that most people who have been vaccinated don't get the kinds of flu from which the vaccine was made. Also, if you do catch flu it is likely to be milder than if you had not been vaccinated. A flu vaccination does not protect you against other viruses which are often around at the same time as flu and may have similar symptoms.

### *DOES THE VACCINE HAVE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?*

Flu vaccines are very safe. They may cause some soreness at the site where you were injected and, sometimes, a slight temperature and aching muscles, for a day or two.

### *IS THERE ANYONE WHO SHOULD NOT BE VACCINATED?*

It is not advised to have a flu vac if you are pregnant, nor should you be vaccinated if you have an allergy to hens' eggs.

If you are in any doubt as to whether or not you should be vaccinated, please ask your G.P.

## *THE HEDON GROUP PRACTICE*

*At*

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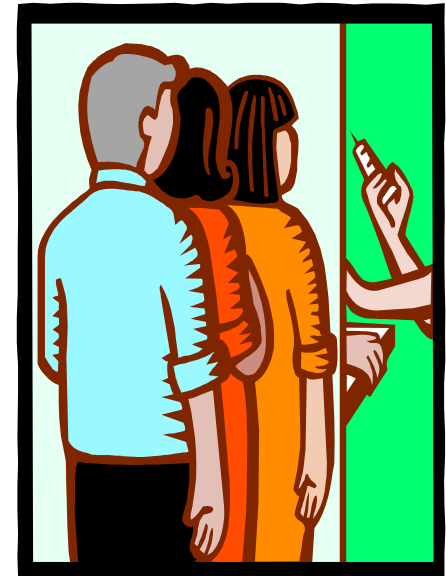
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## *A PATIENT'S GUIDE TO THE FLU VACCINATION*



*This booklet has been produced for  
patients of The Hedon Group Practice.  
Please take one.*

***Flu vaccine cannot cause flu  
because it does not contain any  
live virus***

***WHAT IS FLU?***

Flu is an illness caused by a virus. It is spread by the coughs and sneezes of people who are already infected. Flu viruses are always changing, so this winter's flu will be slightly different from last winter's. In a bad year a lot of people may be infected at the same time. This is called an epidemic. Flu epidemics are difficult to predict. They usually last a few weeks.



***HOW SERIOUS IS FLU?***

Flu is worse than an ordinary cold. For most people it is just a nasty experience, but for some it can lead to more serious illnesses such as Bronchitis and Pneumonia. These illnesses may need treatment in hospital.

***SHOULD EVERYONE HAVE A FLU VAC?***

Healthy people don't need to be vaccinated as flu isn't a serious risk for them and the occasional bout of flu gives better long-term protection than a vaccination.

***WHO NEEDS A FLU VAC?***

Anyone over 65, pregnant women, other people, regardless of their age, need a flu vac if they have a chronic heart or chest complaint, including asthma, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, lowered immunity due to disease or treatment such as steroid medication or cancer treatment, or any other serious medical condition. Main carers for the elderly or disabled people. If you are unsure whether you need a flu vac, check with your G.P.

***HOW IS THE VACCINE MADE?***

Flu vaccine normally contains ingredients from three different kinds of flu virus. The viruses are grown in hens' eggs, then killed and purified before being made into the vaccine. New vaccines are prepared each year to protect against the kinds of flu virus expected that year. We are getting better at predicting which kinds of flu need to be covered.

***HOW DOES THE VACCINE WORK?***

About a week to ten days after vaccination, your body makes antibodies to the vaccine viruses. These antibodies help to protect you against any similar viruses with which you then come into contact. This protection lasts about a year.

***THE SURGERY WILL HAVE  
FLU VACCINES AVAILABLE  
IN OCTOBER***

***THOSE PATIENTS WISHING  
TO BE VACCINATED ARE  
ASKED TO RING  
RECEPTION (01482 899111)  
TO MAKE AN  
APPOINTMENT FOR THIS  
TO BE CARRIED OUT.***