



Flu myth buster



1. Influenza is a virus that **kills thousands of people every year** and is particularly serious for the **older person, the very young** and those with **underlying medical conditions**. It kills otherwise healthy adults and children too.
2. In 2017/18 **over 26,000 people died of flu**. Of those, 8 were under the age of 15.
3. Influenza IS NOT A BAD COLD. Flu symptoms include fever, chills, aching muscles plus cough and sore throat. You are likely to spend a few days in bed. **Flu is a serious and debilitating virus.**
4. **The Flu vaccine cannot give you the flu** – it contains “dead” flu viruses which cannot pass on the virus. The nasal spray for children contains weakened flu viruses that will not give you flu.
HOWEVER, we are giving you the vaccine at a time of year where you can come into contact with lots of other viruses – you can still catch one of these.
PLUS, the side effects of the vaccine are a bit of a sore arm at the injections site, a slight temperature and aching muscles for a few days.
5. The Flu vaccine is safe. It is given to millions of people across the UK every year. Some people will experience mild side effects, but this is much less disruptive than catching the flu.
6. You have a flu vaccine every year because the virus keeps changing. We need to be sure we are protecting you against the circulating virus.
7. Flu cannot be treated with antibiotics – it’s a virus not a bacterial infection. However, a bacterial infection may occur due to the flu and then you would need antibiotics.
8. Have the vaccine even if you think you have had the flu – there are three of four strains in each vaccine and you will only be protected against the one you acquired naturally.





If you have been offered the flu vaccine this year, please consider accepting the vaccination. We have the additional strain of Covid 19 and thousands of ICU beds are taken every winter with patients suffering from the complications of flu. We need to work together to minimise the effect of flu season on our NHS.

If you are unsure whether you are eligible for a free NHS vaccine, ask your practice - the list below is a guide, but your doctor can decide if you would benefit from the vaccine on an individual basis



We are working hard to consider how we can deliver the flu program in an effective, socially distanced way. Help us - if you attend your GP between September and December, ask for you flu vaccine. You can also ask your pharmacist. Get vaccinated early, before flu starts to circulate in November.

Who is eligible for an NHS flu vaccine?

Over 65s

2 & 3 year olds

Reception to Year 7 (in school)

Pregnant women

Learning disability

Immunosuppressed – undergoing chemotherapy? Taking medication for Crohn’s disease? Coeliac?

Asplenic?

Chronic liver disease

Chronic kidney disease

Chronic respiratory disease

Chronic heart disease

Diabetes

Morbidly obese

Neurological disease

Any other reason if your doctor or nurse decides clinically

