

## **Don't forget to get your Flu vaccine!**

It is important that you get your flu vaccine if you are pregnant or become pregnant during the flu season, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### **Why is this important in pregnancy?**

If you catch flu whilst you are pregnant it can put your baby at risk of being born early, being a lower weight at birth, being a smaller size and of stillbirth. Having the vaccine may lower these risks if you get flu. Having the flu vaccine can also protect your baby in the first few months of life when they are at their most helpless. If you catch flu whilst you are pregnant, it can be more serious, you are at a higher risk of developing problems such as bronchitis and pneumonia. These complications can lead to an increased risk of admission to intensive care for both your baby and you.

### **What is Flu?**

It is a very infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly. Symptoms include fever, chills, headache, aches, pains and extreme tiredness, making you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal.

### **How can I protect my baby and myself?**

The best way to protect your baby and yourself from flu is to have your FREE Flu vaccine. If you have children over the age of 2, they will be offered the vaccine, make sure they are vaccinated too.

### **Where can I get my Flu vaccine?**

You can be vaccinated at your local maternity services, GP, or local pharmacy.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Q. Is the vaccine safe?

A. Yes. Pregnant women can safely receive the none live vaccine during any part of the pregnancy, maternal antibodies pass through to the unborn baby, this protection can last for the first few months of the baby's life.

Q. Will the vaccine give me flu?

A. No. The vaccine contains an inactive or none live form of the virus which cannot cause flu. Some people may have a sore arm and mild aches and pains which means the vaccine is working, these should only last 48 hours.

Q. Can I have the flu vaccine with my pertussis vaccine?

A. Yes, you can have the flu vaccine at any point in your pregnancy. The pertussis vaccine can be given from 16 weeks pregnant. If you have not had the flu vaccine by the time you are 16 weeks pregnant, you can have both vaccines at the same time. Do not wait for the flu vaccine if it is offered to you before you are 16 weeks.

Q. I was pregnant in March 2023, and I had the vaccine then, do I need it again?

A. Yes, Flu vaccines are updated each winter to give protection against the strains of flu that are most likely to be going around. The protection from a flu vaccine also goes down with time.

If you had the vaccine during the last flu season because you were pregnant (with the same or different pregnancy), or because you're in a vulnerable group, you will need the vaccine again.

Q. I think I have already had flu. Do I still need a vaccination?

A. Yes. There is more than one type of flu virus, the vaccine will help to protect you against other flu viruses.

Q. Can flu be treated with antibiotics?

A. No. Flu is a virus and the only way to be protected is with a flu vaccine.

Q. Where can I get more information about the flu vaccine in pregnancy?

A. Through your GP, midwife or nurse vaccinator at the trust you are booked to have your baby. There is also lots of information you can access on the NHS website [The flu jab in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)