



FLU information for Young People

What is Flu?

Flu isn't just a heavy cold. Flu occurs every year, usually in the winter, which is why it's sometimes called seasonal flu. It's a highly infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly. Colds are much less serious and usually start gradually with a stuffy or runny nose and a sore throat. A bad bout of flu can be much worse than a heavy cold.

How can you catch Flu?

When an infected person coughs or sneezes, they spread the flu virus in tiny droplets of saliva over a wide area. These droplets can then be breathed in by other people or they can be picked up by touching surfaces where the droplets have landed.

What are the symptoms?

- A temperature
- Body aches
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Headache and feeling tired.

How can Flu spread?

- From people who are coughing or sneezing without the use of a tissue
- Poor hand hygiene

How can we prevent the spread of Flu?

You can prevent the spread of the virus by covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and you can wash your hands frequently or use hand gels to reduce the risk of picking up the virus. But the most effective way to prevent catching flu is by having the flu vaccination.

Who can have the Flu Vaccine?

- All primary children (Reception to year 6) and secondary children in years 7-11
- Children aged 2 years and over with certain long-term health conditions.

What is the Flu Vaccine?

The nasal spray flu vaccine contains small amounts of weakened flu viruses. They do not cause flu in children. As flu viruses change each year, a new nasal spray vaccine has to be given each year.

The brand of nasal spray flu vaccine available in the UK is called Fluenz Tetra.

I am worried about the porcine content in the nasal spray, is there anything else I can have?

The nasal spray vaccine contains small traces of gelatine derived from pigs (porcine gelatine). If this is not suitable because you do not accept the use of porcine gelatine in medical products, a flu vaccine injection is available that contains no gelatine.

How can I have the Flu Vaccine?

The Flu vaccination is routinely given as a nasal spray to children.

If you would prefer to have the Flu Injection due to a long-term health condition listed in our PGD or for religious reasons this is also possible.

**Are there any side effects with the nasal flu spray?**

If you do, they will be mild and not last long, and can include:

- Runny or blocked nose
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite

What do I do on the day of the vaccination.

If you are feeling unwell, please tell the nurse that is assessing you at the session.

My parents do not want me to receive the vaccination, but I do. Who can I talk to for support?

Come and talk to us on the day. All the nurses are here to support you.

[Consent to treatment - Children and young people - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/consent-to-treatment/)

What do I do if I am unsure if I need this vaccine?

The flu is offered every year to protect you, your friends, family, and the wider community from flu viruses. If you are in secondary school years 7-11 then you are eligible for the vaccination.

For further info

Flu Heros Video - <https://youtu.be/1jHWwm8NQUw?si=E4HaEbddzMRcUhOE>

NHS Flu info - www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu

How do I contact you?

You can telephone the team on 0300 365 0077.

You can email:

- **If you live or attend a school in Reading or West Berkshire -**
Westschoolsimms@berkshire.nhs.uk
- **If you live or attend a school in Slough, Windsor, Ascot, or Maidenhead-**
Eastschoolimms@berkshire.nhs.uk
- **If you live or attend a school in Wokingham or Bracknell -**
Centralschoolimms@berkshire.nhs.uk

How do I know if am up to date with my vaccinations?

You can contact the Child Health Information Service on 0300 561 1851 **Or** alternatively contact your doctors.

What should I do on the day of the vaccination?

Eat Breakfast. Drink well. Try to blow your nose.

How do I stay well after I have had my vaccination?

Drink lots of water

Eat well.

All about flu and how to stop getting it

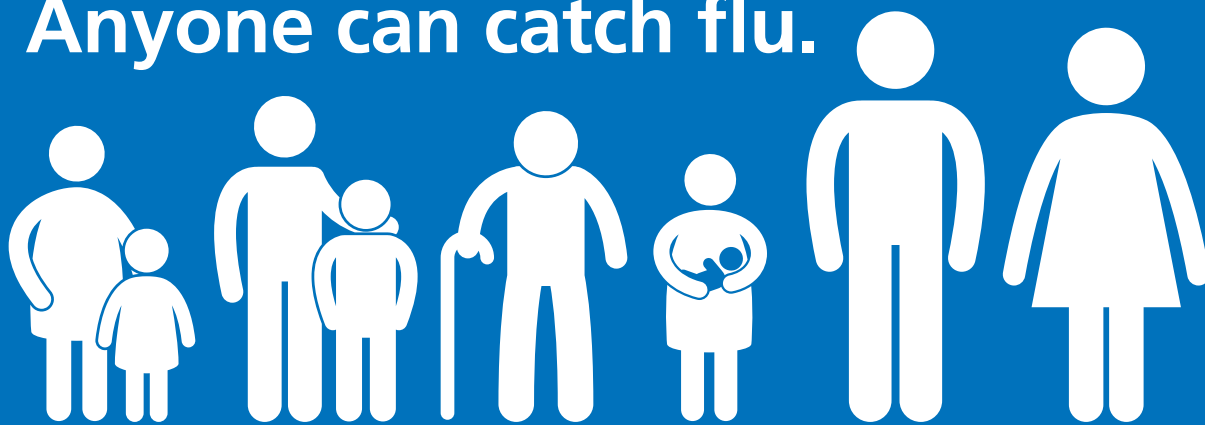
Simple text version for children



Flu  mmunisation

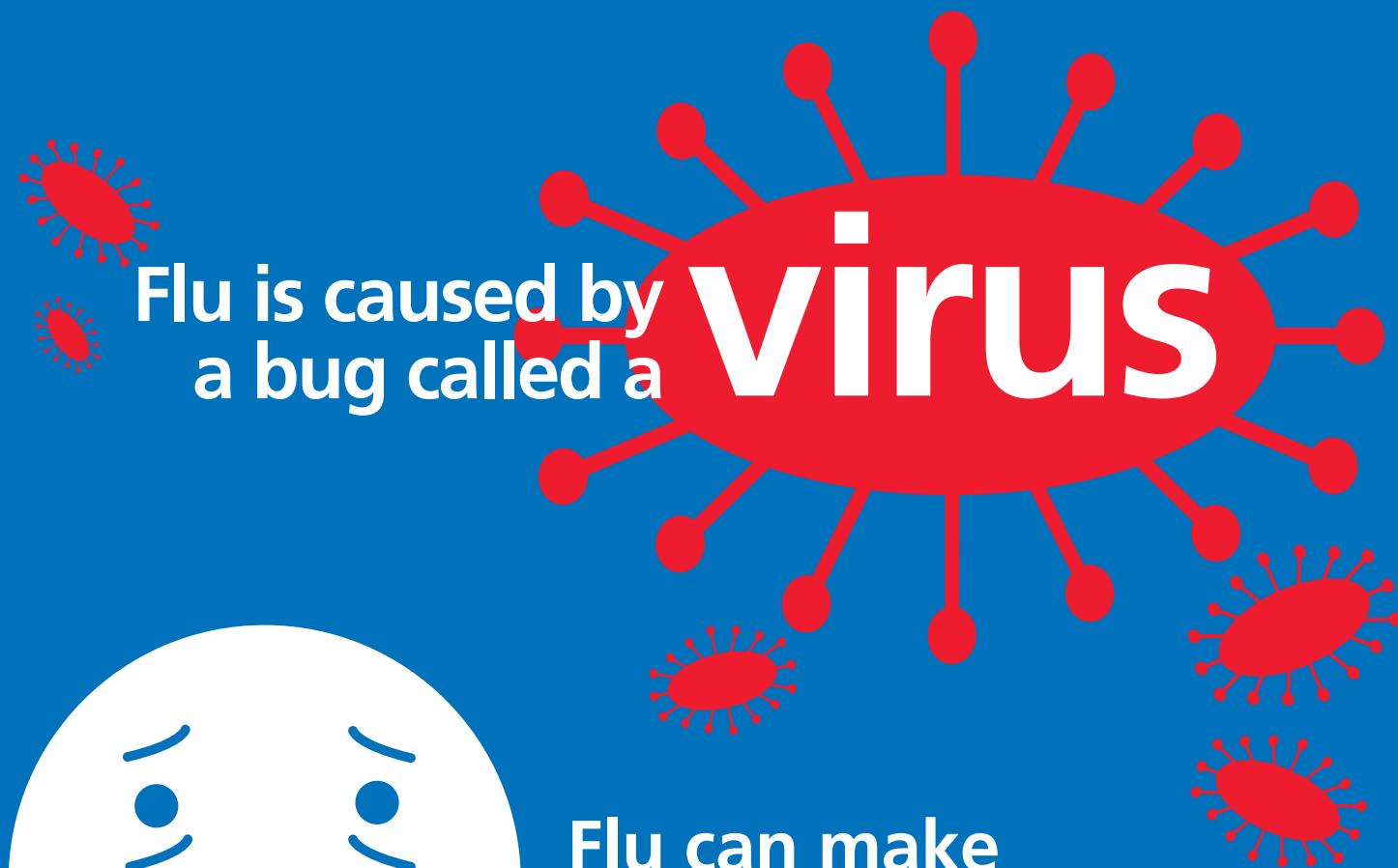
Helping to protect everyone,
at every age

Anyone can catch flu.



Flu is caused by
a bug called a

virus



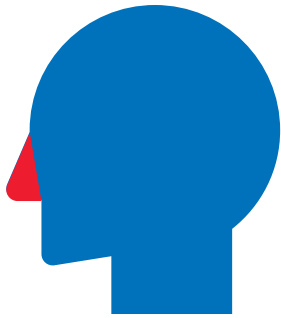
Flu can make
you feel ill.



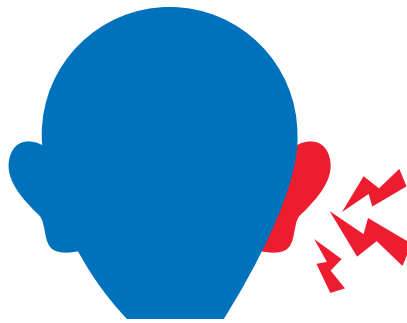
If you are very ill you might
even need to go to hospital.



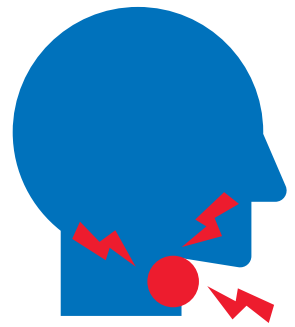
Here are the signs of flu.



blocked up nose



painful ear



sore throat



high temperature



difficulty breathing



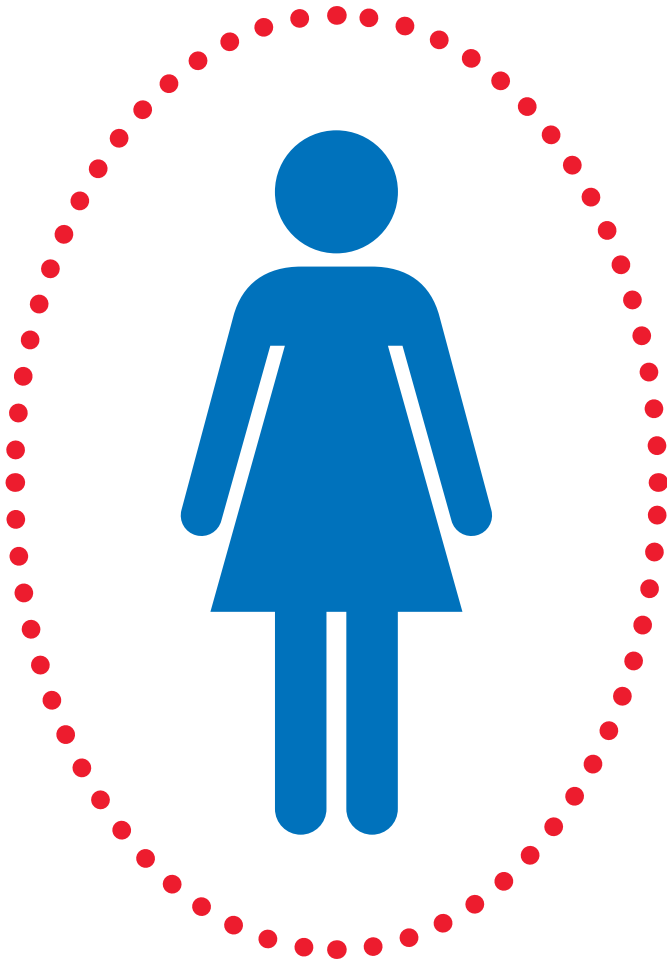
dry cough



tiredness

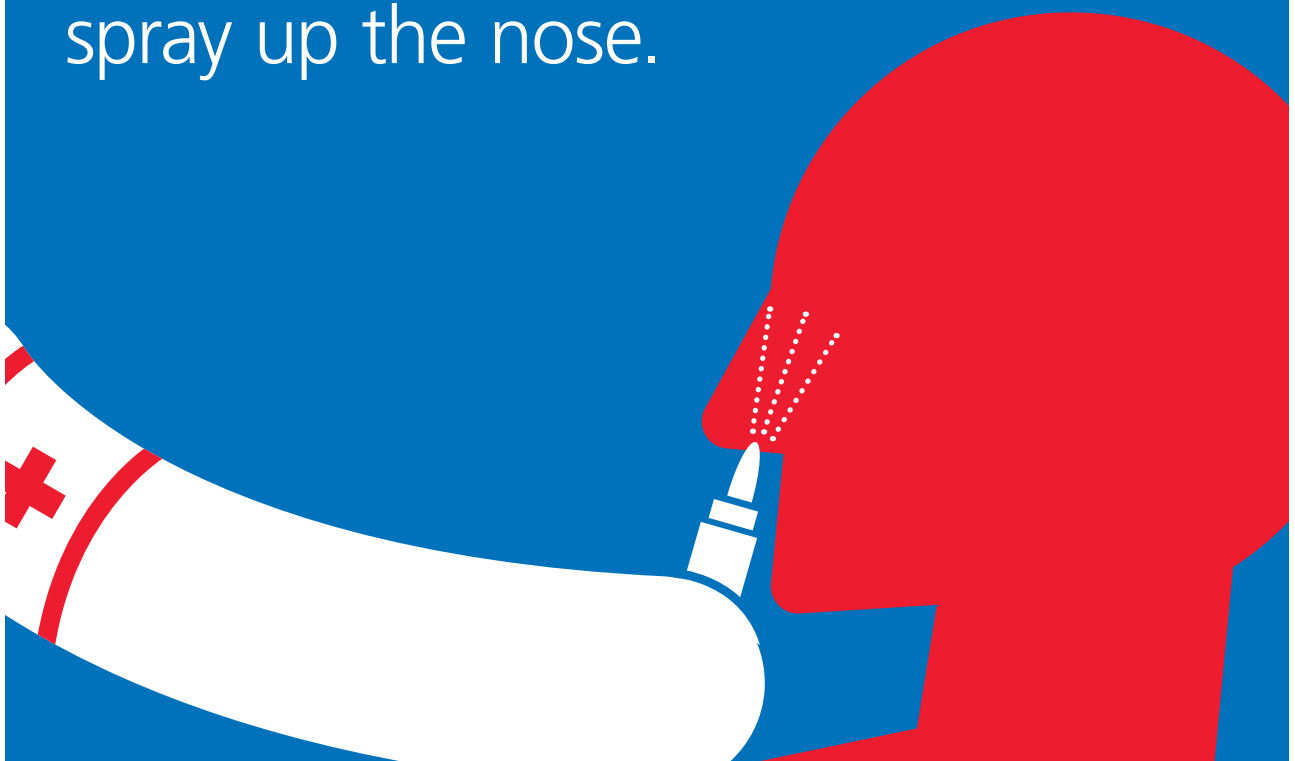


aches



Having a
vaccine can
help stop you
catching flu.

The vaccine is a small
spray up the nose.



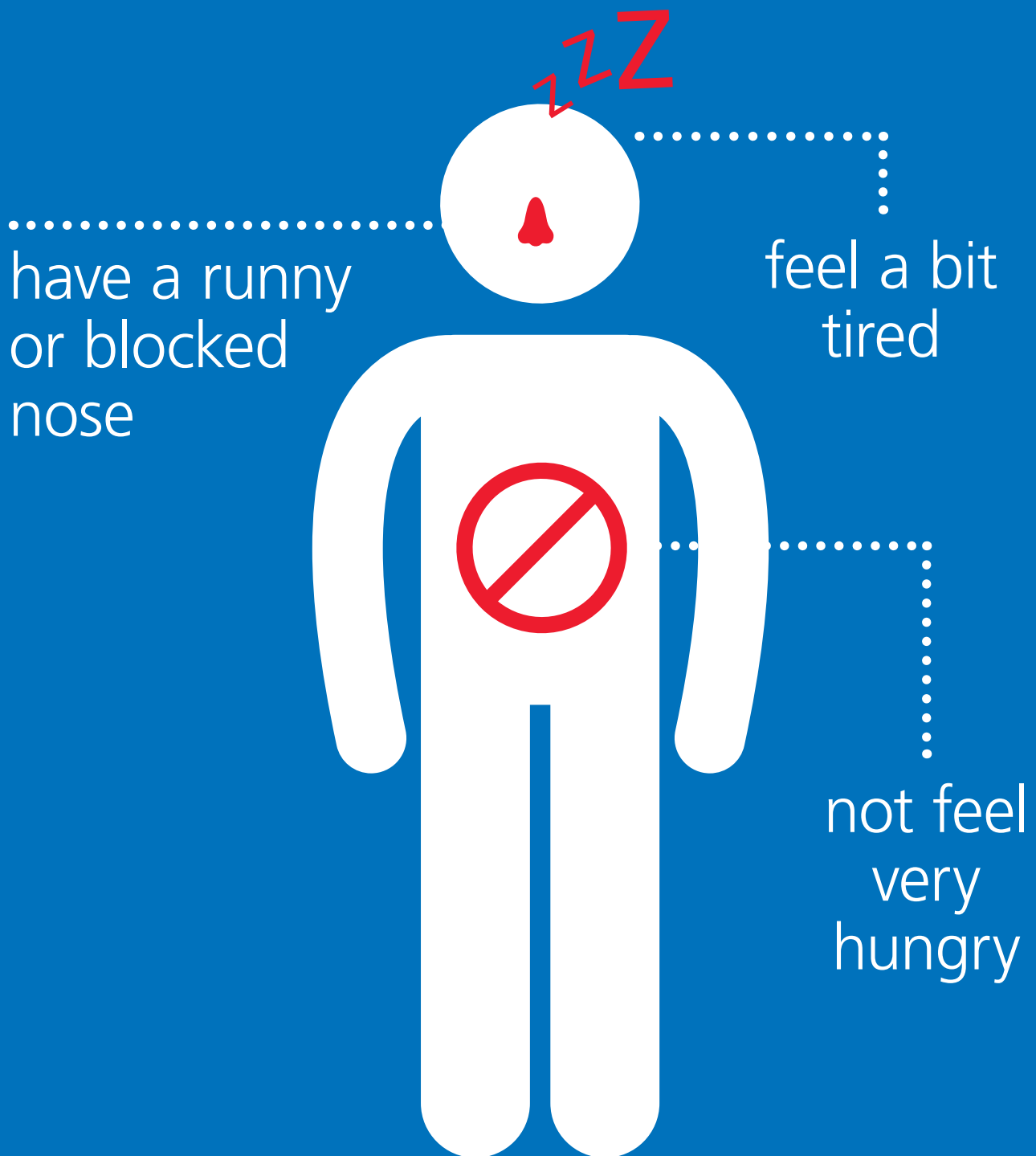
The best time to have a flu spray is in the autumn.

You need a flu spray every year as flu can change each year.



Will the nasal spray make me feel ill?

After a nasal spray you may:



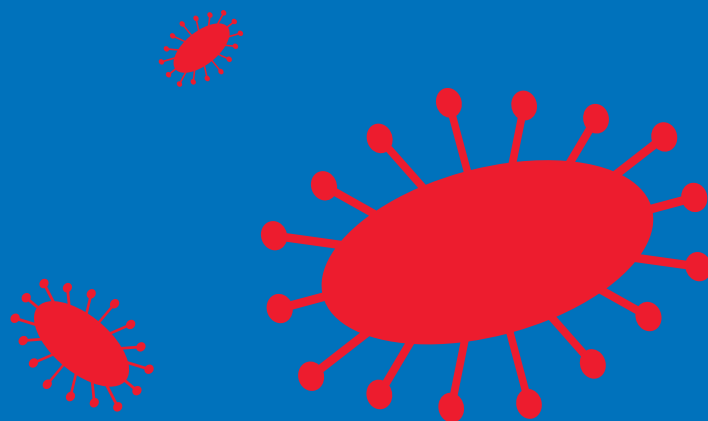
This will go away in a few days.

If you have any questions or want more information, talk to your school nurse.



You can also find information online at
www.tinyurl.com/NHSfluinfo





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More copies of this leaflet can be ordered from:

Health Publications www.healthpublications.gov.uk/Home.html



UK Health
Security
Agency



Protect yourself against flu

Flu immunisation in England

Information for those in secondary school



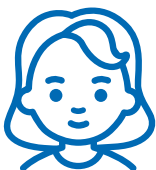
Flu  mmunisation

Helping to protect you against flu

Flu vaccine is offered free to:

Children aged
2 or 3 years old

(on 31 August before
flu vaccinations start
in the autumn)



All primary
school-aged
children

Some secondary
school-aged
children



Children with a
health condition
that puts them
at greater risk
from flu

Further information on which children are eligible each year can be found at: www.nhs.uk/child-flu

Why should I have the flu vaccine?

Flu can be a very unpleasant illness causing fever, stuffy nose, dry cough, sore throat, aching muscles and joints, and extreme tiredness. This can last several days or more. Some people develop complications and need to go to hospital for treatment.

What are the benefits of the vaccine?

Having the vaccine will help protect you from what can be a very nasty illness. It can help you avoid having to miss out on the things you enjoy and disruption to your education.

Why are so many young people being offered the vaccine?

The vaccine will help protect you against flu and reduces the chance of you spreading flu to others so in turn helps protect your family and friends.

It will help to reduce flu levels in the population in the winter when there may be pressure on the NHS with COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses in circulation.

I had the flu vaccination last year. Do I need another one this year?

Yes; flu viruses change every year so the vaccine may be updated. For this reason, we recommend that you are vaccinated against flu again this year, even if vaccinated last year.

How will the vaccine be given?

It is usually given as a nasal spray.

So how does the nasal spray work?

The nasal spray contains viruses that have been weakened to prevent them from causing flu but will help you to build up immunity.

The vaccine is absorbed quickly in the nose so, even if you sneeze immediately after having had the spray, there's no need to worry that it hasn't worked.

Are there any side-effects of the vaccine?

You may develop a runny or blocked nose, headache, general tiredness and some loss of appetite. However, these are much less serious than developing flu and its complications. Serious side-effects are uncommon.

What if I am not feeling well on the day?

The vaccination may be delayed if you have a fever. Also, if you have a heavily blocked or runny nose, it might stop the vaccine getting into your system. In this case, the flu vaccination can be postponed until your nasal symptoms have cleared up. Sometimes an injected vaccine may be offered instead.



What about those young people who have a long-term health condition?

If you have a health condition that puts you at higher risk of serious complications from flu, you should have the flu vaccine every year. If you have one of these health conditions and are not in one of the groups being offered flu vaccine at school, you can also ask your GP surgery to give you the vaccine. You can also ask your GP surgery to do this if, for example, you don't want to wait until the school vaccination session.

Long term health conditions that put you more at risk from flu

These conditions include:

- serious breathing problems, such as asthma needing regular use of steroid inhaler or tablets
- serious heart conditions
- kidney or liver disease
- diabetes
- weakened immune system as a result of a condition or treatment with medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- problems with the spleen, for example, sickle cell disease, or the spleen has been removed
- learning disability
- problems with the nervous system, such as cerebral palsy



Visit www.nhs.uk/child-flu for more information

Are there any young people who shouldn't have the nasal vaccine?

The nasal spray vaccine is offered to young people as it is more effective in the programme than the injected vaccine. However, some young people with long term health conditions may not be able to have the nasal vaccine (see details below). Your parents will be given a consent form to complete ahead of the vaccination, which will include questions to check whether it is suitable for you. They can speak with the school immunisation team if they have any questions. If you cannot have the nasal spray, you will be offered an injectable flu vaccine.

Who shouldn't have the nasal vaccine?

Instead of the nasal spray vaccine, you should have an injected flu vaccine if you:

- are currently wheezy or have been wheezy in the past 72 hours
- have a very weakened immune system or someone in your household needs isolation because they are severely immunosuppressed
- have a condition that needs salicylate treatment
- have had an anaphylactic reaction to a flu vaccine, or any of the components, in the past (other than egg)

Young people who have been vaccinated with the nasal spray should avoid close contact with people with very severely weakened immune systems (for example those who have just had a bone marrow transplant) for around 2 weeks following vaccination. If contact is likely or unavoidable then an alternative flu vaccine should be given.

If you're not sure, check with the school immunisation team, or the nurse or GP at your surgery.

Your parents should seek the advice of your specialist, if you have:

- had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to egg in the past that required intensive care treatment
- asthma that's being treated with steroid tablets or required intensive care treatment in hospital

Does the nasal vaccine contain gelatine derived from pigs (porcine gelatine)?

Yes. The nasal vaccine contains a highly processed form of gelatine (porcine gelatine), which is used in a range of many essential medicines. The gelatine helps to keep the vaccine viruses stable so that the vaccine provides the best protection against flu.

The nasal vaccine is offered to children and young people as it is more effective in the programme than the injected vaccine. This is because it is easier to administer and considered better at reducing the spread of flu to others, who may be more vulnerable to the complications of flu. However, if you are at high risk from flu due to one or more medical conditions or treatments and can't have the nasal flu vaccine you should have the flu vaccine by injection. For those who may not accept the use of porcine gelatine in medical products, an alternative injectable vaccine is available. Your parents should discuss the options with the school immunisation team.

5 reasons to have the flu vaccine

1. Protect yourself.

The vaccine will help protect you against flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia

2. Protect your family and friends.

Having the vaccine will help protect more vulnerable friends and family

3. No injection needed.

The nasal spray is painless and easy to have

4. It's better than having flu.

The nasal spray helps protect against flu, has been given to millions worldwide and has an excellent safety record

5. Avoid lost opportunities.

If you get flu, you may be unwell for several days and not be able to do the things you enjoy

Where can I get more information?

Visit www.nhs.uk/child-flu for more information. Talk to the school immunisation team, your GP, or practice nurse if you have any further questions.



www.nhs.uk/vaccinations

flu: 5 reasons to have the vaccine

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Flu  **mmunisation**

Helping to protect you against flu

