

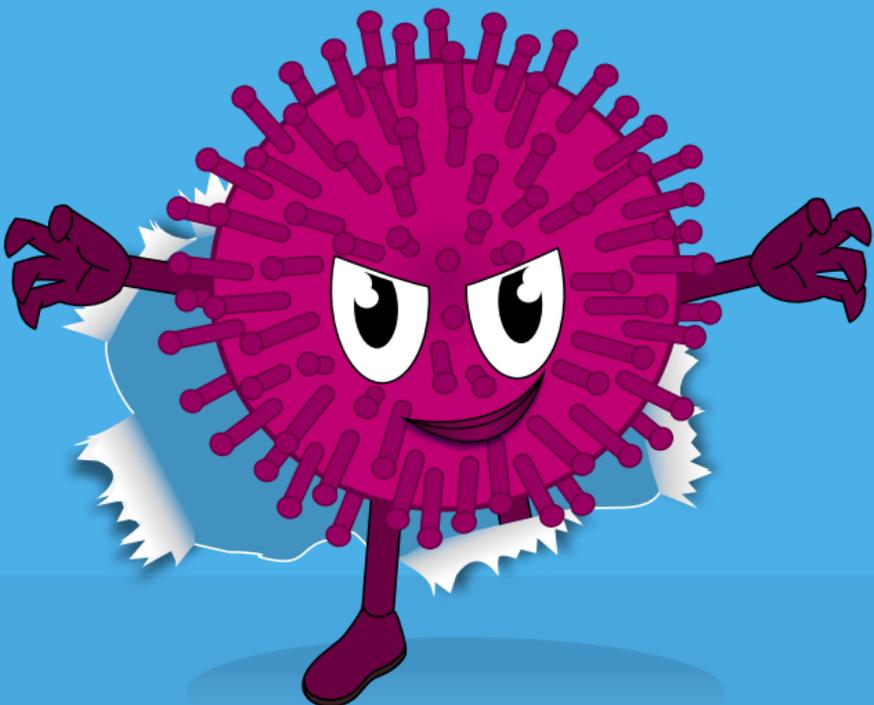


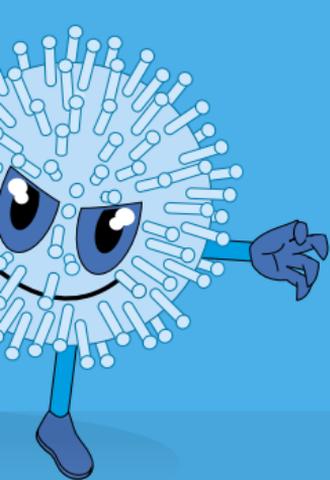
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# FLU

PROTECT YOUR CHILD

Flu vaccination for  
Children 2014





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In 2014, all 2, 3 and 4 year old children, those of school year 7 age, and children aged 2 and over at increased risk of being very ill with flu, will be offered a nasal spray flu vaccine to help protect them from flu.

## **Why do children need to be protected from flu?**

Flu is caused by viruses and spreads easily. Anyone can get flu but rates of infection are highest among children. It can cause fever, chills, aching muscles, headache, tiredness, blocked nose, cough and a sore throat, lasting up to a week. Often children who get flu feel very unwell and need a few days in bed, and for some it can cause serious illness. Complications include bronchitis, pneumonia and ear infections. Some children are so ill they need to be admitted to hospital.

Children at increased risk of becoming very ill with flu, such as those with health

conditions like diabetes, heart or lung disease, have been offered an annual flu vaccination for many years.

## How does flu vaccine help?

Flu vaccine, especially the nasal spray for children, offers good protection against flu in the season it is given. Protection starts around two weeks after having it. Some people still get flu even after having the vaccine but often with milder symptoms. Flu vaccines do not protect against colds and other winter illnesses.

***A flu vaccine gives children good protection from flu and also helps to stop it spreading.***

## Which children will be offered a flu vaccine in 2014?

Healthy children aged 2, 3 and 4 years old and those of school year 7 age will be offered a flu vaccine. For most children the flu vaccine will be given as a spray up the nose.

An annual flu vaccine will eventually be offered to all healthy children aged 2 or over but until that time the age groups offered the vaccine may alter each year.

Children aged 6 months and over, at increased risk of becoming very ill with flu, will continue to be offered flu vaccination every year.

# What sort of flu vaccine will be given to children?

Most children can have a vaccine which is given as a spray up the nose. This spray vaccine gives better protection to children than the flu injection. There are a small number of children who can't have the spray vaccine and they will be offered a flu vaccine injection which is given in the arm.

**The nasal spray vaccine is not recommended for anyone who is:**

- Under 2 years of age.
- Aged 18 years of age or older.
- Pregnant.
- On long-term aspirin (salicylate) treatment.
- Allergic to eggs.
- In close contact with someone who has a weakened immune system (e.g. after a bone marrow transplant) and is being nursed in a protected environment.

**Or anyone who has:**

- Severe asthma.
- A wheeze at the time the vaccine is due.
- A weakened immune system.

## Are there any children who should not have a flu vaccine at all?

There are very few people who cannot have a flu vaccine at all. People who have previously had a serious allergic reaction to a flu vaccine (or any part of it) should not have that flu vaccine again. People who are unwell with a high temperature should delay the vaccination until they are better.

***A cough, cold or other minor illness is not a reason to delay flu vaccination.***

The nasal spray vaccine will still work in those with a runny nose or those who sneeze straight after having it.

## How often is the flu vaccine needed?

A flu vaccine is needed every year to give the best protection. As flu viruses can change each year, new vaccines are produced to match them.

## Can the flu vaccine be given at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes, flu vaccines can be given at the same time as other vaccines. If a child misses their flu vaccination, then speak to the school nurse, health visitor, practice nurse or GP about making another appointment.

## Are there any side effects from the flu vaccine?

Flu vaccines are very safe. Some children get a slight temperature, feel tired, have a headache or aching muscles for a day or two after having a flu vaccine. The nasal spray may cause a runny or blocked nose. The injection can leave a sore arm. Other reactions are less common.

After the nasal spray flu vaccine, it is best to avoid contact for 1- 2 weeks with anyone whose immune system is very weak, such as someone who has recently had a bone marrow transplant. This is best discussed with your doctor or nurse before the vaccine is given.

***Flu vaccination is quick and safe and could prevent weeks of serious illness.***

## Will the flu vaccine cause flu?

No, the flu vaccine will not cause flu.

## How will children be called? Do I need to do anything?

Children who are 2, 3, and 4 years old on 31 August 2014 will be invited to attend the GP surgery for the vaccine.

Most year 7 pupils will be offered the vaccine in school and will be sent information and a consent form.

Please read the information and return the

signed form to school as soon as possible. Parents' involvement in children's consent for a vaccine is always best but in some circumstances older children may give consent for themselves if they are able to fully understand what is being offered.

For children in other age groups at increased risk of complications from flu, the vaccine will be available through the GP surgery.

Flu vaccines are normally available from the end of September. For the best protection the vaccine should be given in the early autumn before there are any outbreaks of flu. It can still be given later in the year than this, but early autumn is best.

## Is the nasal spray a new vaccine?

No. Millions of doses of the nasal spray vaccine have been given in countries around the world over the last 10 years, particularly in America.

## Where can I get more information?

You can get advice from your GP practice, school nurse, Health Visitor or NHS Direct Wales.



Visit: [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/) or phone NHS Direct Wales on **0845 46 47**



Further information on consent in health care for young people is available from:

[www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation](http://www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation)



The vaccine used for most children is called Fluenz Tetra®.

You can find out more about this vaccine at:

[www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) by entering the name of the vaccine in the search box and looking at the patient information leaflet (PIL).

Copies of this leaflet are available by e-mailing: [hplibrary@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:hplibrary@wales.nhs.uk) or telephoning: **0845 606 4050**

This leaflet is available on the Welsh Government immunisation website at: [www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation](http://www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation)

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