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BEAT FLU

FLU

PROTECT YOUR CHILD WITH
A SIMPLE NASAL SPRAY

Flu vaccination for children in 2020/21



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| YOUR CHILD'S AGE ON 31 AUGUST 2020 | IS MY CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR A FLU VACCINATION? |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Under two years old | Maybe. If your child has a long-term health condition, they should be vaccinated. |
| Two or three years old | Yes. Your child will be offered a flu vaccine at their GP surgery. (In some areas, three-year-olds will be offered the vaccine in nursery.) |
| Four to 10 years old | Yes. Your child will be offered a flu vaccine at their school. (If your child doesn't go to school, ask your GP surgery for the flu vaccine.) |
| 11 years and over | Maybe. If your child has a long-term health condition, make sure they are vaccinated. |

For any changes to the programme due to **COVID-19** pandemic, go to beatflu.org



Most children aged two to 10 have a flu vaccine every year.

It is especially important that children aged between six months and 17 years who have a long-term health condition get vaccinated, as they are at higher risk of complications if they catch flu.

WHY DO CHILDREN NEED A FLU VACCINE?

Flu is caused by viruses and spreads easily. Anyone can get flu but **children have the highest rate of infection** and flu can be serious for them.

Complications can include bronchitis, pneumonia and ear infections.

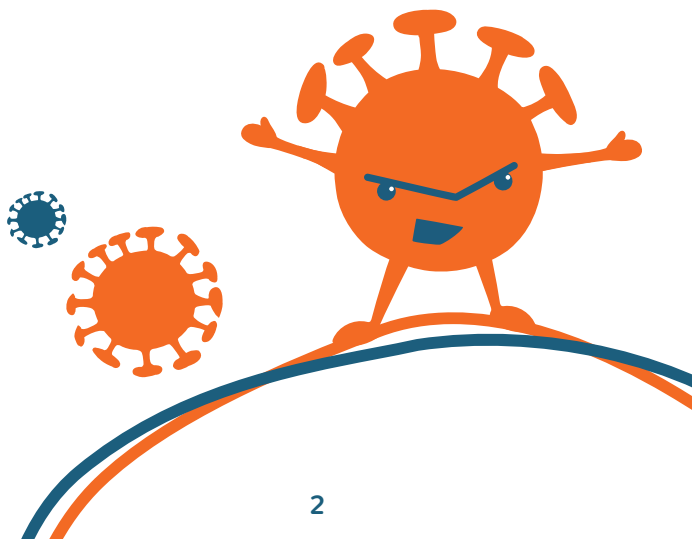
Some children get so ill they need to go into hospital.

HOW DOES A FLU VACCINE HELP?

Having a flu vaccine **will help protect your child** from flu. Protection starts around two weeks after having the vaccine. The vaccine usually offers children good protection against flu.

It also helps reduce the chance of children spreading flu to others who are at high risk from flu, such as young babies, grandparents, and those with long-term health conditions.

Some people still get flu even after having a flu vaccine, but often with milder symptoms. **Flu vaccines do not protect against colds, other respiratory viruses or other winter illnesses.**



DO FLU VACCINES HAVE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

After vaccination, some children may get a temperature, feel tired, have a headache, have aching muscles or have a reduced appetite for a day or two. The nasal spray may cause a runny or blocked nose. The injection can leave a sore arm. Other reactions are less common.

- ✓ flu vaccines are very safe.
- ✓ the flu vaccine will not cause flu.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS A HEALTH CONDITION?

If your child is aged six months or older and has one of the following health conditions, it is important they have a flu vaccine every year as they are at increased risk of complications from flu.

Conditions include:

- a heart complaint;
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties (including asthma that needs regular steroid inhalers or tablets);
- kidney disease;
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment;
- liver disease;
- diabetes;
- a neurological condition (such as cerebral palsy); and
- a problem with the spleen.

Children and young adults who care for someone with one of those conditions, or for someone aged 65 or over, should also have a flu vaccine every year.

DO I NEED TO DO ANYTHING?

This flu season, arrangements may be different due to COVID-19. For the latest information, see beatflu.org

Children who are aged two or three on 31 August 2020 are normally invited to have their flu vaccine at their GP surgery.

In some areas, three-year-olds are offered the vaccine in nursery.

If your child hasn't received an invitation for the vaccine by mid-November, contact their GP surgery.

Children in primary school (reception class to year 6) are normally sent information and a consent form by the school and have their flu vaccine in school. Please read the information and return the signed form to school as soon as possible. Please see beatflu.org for any changes due to COVID-19.

If your child is four years old and not in school, contact their GP surgery to get their vaccine.

If your child is aged under two or in secondary school and is at increased risk of complications from flu due to a health condition, their GP surgery should invite them to have the vaccine.

Ideally, the flu vaccine should be given in the early autumn before there are any outbreaks of flu. However, it can still be given at a later date.

Flu vaccines will be given following the current guidance around social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE), to help keep your child safe.



If your child misses their flu vaccine, speak to their school nurse, health visitor or GP surgery about getting the vaccine.



WHAT TYPE OF FLU VACCINE IS GIVEN TO CHILDREN?

Most children will get a nasal spray vaccine as this is the best flu vaccine for children. It is a fine mist sprayed up the nose, and can be given from the age of two.

A small number of children can't have the nasal spray vaccine, and they may be offered a flu vaccine injection instead.

✗ The nasal spray vaccine can't be given to anyone who is:

- under two years old;
- 18 of age or older;
- pregnant;
- on long-term aspirin (salicylate) treatment; taking steroid tablets (currently, or in the last two weeks); or
- in close contact with someone who has a severely weakened immune system (for example, after a bone marrow transplant) and is being looked after in a protected environment.

✗ The nasal spray vaccine can't be given to anyone who has:

- had a severe life-threatening allergic reaction to a flu vaccine (or any ingredient in the vaccine);
- a weakened immune system;
- a wheezy chest on the day of the vaccination or in the previous three days.
- increased the use of their asthma inhalers in the previous three days.



Children with asthma who need regular oral steroids or have needed intensive-care treatment for their asthma should be referred to a specialist for advice.

A cold or other minor illness is not a reason to delay a child's flu vaccination. If your child is unwell with a high temperature it is best to delay their vaccination until they are feeling better. Remember to follow COVID-19 advice if your child has a fever or a cough.

If your child cannot avoid contact with someone who has very severely weakened immunity, such as someone who has recently had a bone marrow transplant, you should discuss this with your doctor or nurse before your child has the nasal spray vaccine. They may decide to offer your child a flu vaccine injection instead.

CAN MY CHILD HAVE THE VACCINE IF THEY ARE ALLERGIC TO EGG?

Most children who are allergic to egg can receive the vaccine with no problems. The small number of children who have previously needed intensive-care treatment for anaphylaxis (a rare, life-threatening allergic reaction) to egg should be referred to a specialist.

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.

DOES THE NASAL SPRAY VACCINE CONTAIN GELATINE?

Yes, it contains traces of highly purified porcine gelatine which is also used in a range of essential medicines.

The nasal spray vaccine is best for children, but an alternative gelatine-free flu vaccine injection can be requested at their GP surgery.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Visit beatflu.org

You can find out more about the nasal spray vaccine, including its contents and possible side effects, at www.medicines.org.uk/emc/

You will need to put the name of the vaccine (Fluenz Tetra) in the search box.

You can report suspected side effects online at yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/ or call the Yellow Card hotline on 0800 731 6789 (Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm).

A schedule showing which immunisations are routinely offered in Wales is available from www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/livewell/vaccinations/Leaflets/

If you have any questions or want more information, talk to your doctor, nurse, health visitor or school nurse, visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk or call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 or 111 (if available in your area).

To find out how the NHS uses your information, visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/lifestylewellbeing/yourinfoyourrights

To order more copies of this leaflet, visit www.publichealthwales.org/HealthInformationResources

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