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Winter is coming...Be prepared by getting your flu vaccination

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Winter is coming...Be prepared by getting your flu vaccination

Posted on Tuesday 25th October 2016

People living in Cumbria are being urged to have their flu vaccination and take steps to keep themselves well this winter.

Some patients are eligible to receive a free flu jab from their GP including everyone aged over 65, women who are pregnant, patients who suffer from a chronic illness (such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), kidney disease, hepatitis, Parkinsons, HIV and diabetes) and children aged between two and seven years.



The flu vaccine is available every year to protect adults (and some children) at risk of flu and its complications. It provides protection against strains of flu that are predicted to circulate each year, as these strains may be different from previous years.

Studies have shown that flu vaccinations will help prevent people from getting flu. Although the vaccine won't stop all flu viruses and the level of protection may vary from person to person. If you do get flu after vaccination it is likely to be milder and shorter-lived than it otherwise might have been.

The seasonal flu vaccine is offered free of charge to protect people who are most vulnerable to the effects of flu and at the greatest risk from catching and spreading flu.

Dr Rachel Preston, NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group's Lead GP for Eden said: "Don't wait until there is a flu outbreak this winter; get your vaccination as soon as possible, especially if you are in an 'at risk' category. This is a simple procedure which could ultimately save lives.

"All NHS staff are encouraged to get the vaccination which will also help to protect patients, colleagues and their families.

"The option of the nasal vaccination is especially excellent for children, ensuring that they are protected with this painless and effective process."

Dr Geoff Jolliffe, NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group's Lead GP for Furness said: "Even if you had your jab last year, you will need to have one again, because flu changes every year. Real flu can be debilitating and if you are already living with a condition either very young or very old it can hit you harder.

If you are entitled to get your jab, please take up the offer as soon as possible."

The cold weather can often cause symptoms of illness, but many of them can be tackled by taking some simple steps and by visiting your local pharmacy.

Here are some other simple tips to help you stay well this winter.

- Keep warm –If you have reduced mobility, are 65 or over, or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease, you should heat your home to at least 18C. If you're under 65 and healthy and active, you can safely

have your house cooler than 18C, if you're comfortable.

- Eat well – food gives you energy, which helps to keep you warm. So, try to have regular hot meals and drinks throughout the day.

If you need medical advice you can call NHS 111 for free 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For further information on how you can keep well this winter including advice, articles and tips visit:

<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/winterhealth/Pages/Winterhealthhome.aspx>

Keep up to date with news, advice and information from the NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group on social media through Facebook at: [facebook.com/nhscumbriaccg](https://www.facebook.com/nhscumbriaccg) and on Twitter at: twitter.com/NHSCumbriaCCG

Notes

Pictured: Chief Executive of North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust Stephen Eames Receiving his flu jab.

The following groups are eligible to receive the free flu vaccination:

- everyone aged 65 years and over
- all pregnant women
- those aged six months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups including patients who suffer from a chronic illness, such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), kidney disease, hepatitis, Parkinsons, HIV and diabetes.
- all children aged two to seven (but not eight years or older) on 31 August 2016 (This includes all children of appropriate age in school years 1, 2, and 3, even if their age falls outside the birth cohorts specified. This also includes all children in the relevant age cohort irrespective of whether they attend school).
- all primary school-aged children in former primary school pilot areas
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers
- Frontline health and social care workers should be provided flu vaccination by their employer. This includes general practice staff.

Vaccinations are made available to all front line employees of the NHS to enable staff to protect patients, colleagues and families.

Flu can be serious for young children and for most children the vaccine will now be given as a painless nasal spray, which doesn't involve any injections.

Posted on Tuesday 25th October 2016



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