

# Flu vaccine for adults



Easy Read



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Our Easy Read booklets may still have some difficult words in them. You may need to ask someone to help you read this booklet.

## What is flu?



Flu is a virus that spreads easily and can be very serious. A virus is a kind of germ that causes illnesses.



The flu virus spreads through the air when people cough or sneeze.



Or by people touching surfaces where it has landed then touching their eyes, nose and mouth.



Even healthy people can become very ill from flu. Flu can make a person so ill they might have to go into hospital.



More people might catch flu this winter.

## The symptoms of flu

Symptoms is the word we use to describe how an illness makes people feel. Flu symptoms can come on very quickly and include:



fever (a temperature of 38°C or over)



muscle aches and pains



feeling very tired



a cough



a headache



loss of appetite



diarrhoea (runny poo) or tummy pain



feeling sick or being sick.

## The flu vaccine



The flu vaccine is the safest, most effective protection against flu. It is offered every year for free by the NHS.

A vaccine is a treatment that helps to stop people catching a disease. You might hear people talk about a vaccine as a jab or an injection.



The vaccine will help protect you against the main types of flu virus.

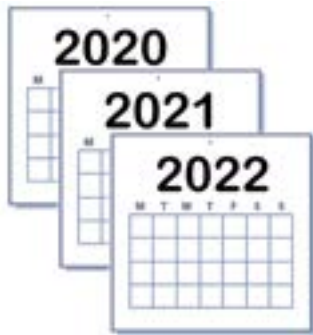
There is still a chance you might catch flu. If you do, you will not feel as ill as you would without the vaccine.



Having the flu vaccine will also stop you spreading flu to other people.



The vaccine teaches your body to protect itself from the flu virus. The vaccine cannot give you flu.



The flu virus is different each year and this winter we might not be able to fight off flu as well as usual.

You will you also be less able to fight it off over time.



The vaccine will be given as a jab in your upper arm.



You only need one jab of the flu vaccine.





**September**

Flu vaccinations begin in September.



**10 days**

It takes about 10 days for the vaccine to work, so the sooner you get it the better.



## Who will be offered the flu vaccine?

You should have the free flu vaccine this year if you:



are aged 50 or over



have a certain health condition



work in health or social care



are an unpaid or young carer



are a nursery, primary or secondary school teacher or school support staff



are a prison officer or prison support staff



are pregnant.



NHS Scotland recommends you get the vaccine as soon as it is offered to you.



To find out if you should get the flu vaccine go to this website  
**[www.nhsinform.scot/flu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/flu)**



## Side effects

Some people feel ill after having the vaccine. We call these side effects.

Side effects of the flu vaccine can happen but they are usually not serious. They are much less serious than getting flu.

You might have:



tenderness or an ache in the arm where you got the vaccine



a headache



aching muscles



fever, a temperature of 38°C or over.



These common side effects are much less serious than flu and they usually go away after a few days.

**3 to 4 days**



For more information on what is in the vaccine and how it is made, visit [www.nhsinform.scot/flu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/flu)



or call **0800 030 8013** (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week).

## Fever after the vaccine and COVID-19

It is common to have a fever after your vaccination. A fever is a temperature of 38°C or above.



This normally happens within 2 days of getting the vaccine and usually goes away again after 2 days.



You do not need to self-isolate or book a COVID-19 test unless:

- you have been told to by NHS Test and Protect
- you have been told to by a health professional.



If the fever starts more than 48 hours after the vaccine or lasts longer than 48 hours, you should self-isolate and book a COVID-19 test.



You can book a COVID-19 test at [www.nhsinform.scot/testing](http://www.nhsinform.scot/testing)



You can report side effects of the vaccine through the Yellow Card scheme at [www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk)



This information is a guide only. Always get medical advice from **NHS24** free on **111** if you are worried about your health.

## Reasons not to get the vaccine



You should not get the vaccine if you have had a serious allergic reaction to a vaccine in the past.

Serious means very bad and dangerous for your health.

An allergic reaction is when your body gets ill because of certain things, like a type of food or a medicine.



Some flu vaccines are made from eggs, so you must tell the person giving you the vaccine if you have an allergy to eggs.



If you are not sure whether you can have the flu vaccine, ask your GP.



## More information

For more information visit this website  
[www.nhsinform.scot/flu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/flu)



Or call **0800 030 8013** (8am to 8pm,  
7 days a week).



You can also talk to your practice nurse  
or GP.







Other formats of this publication are available on request at:



**0800 030 8013**



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Public Health Scotland is Scotland's  
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improving and protecting the health  
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