



Flu

**Is your child  
aged 2–5\*?**

**Fact:  
They're more at  
risk from flu.**

2019 edition

\*on 1 September 2019 (and not yet in school)

Trust the facts.  
**Get the vaccine.**

[www.flufacts.scot](http://www.flufacts.scot)



The flu vaccine is recommended for:

- all children in Scotland aged 2 to 5 years on 1 September 2019, and not yet in school (vaccine given at their GP practice)
- all primary school children (vaccine given at school).

Flu is very infectious and can be serious. Even healthy children can become seriously ill from flu and can spread it to family, friends and others.



**Having the flu vaccine every year is the best protection available against an unpredictable virus that can cause severe illness.**



[www.nhsinform.scot/childflu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/childflu)



## Flu facts

- Influenza (flu) is an infectious virus and even healthy children can become seriously ill from flu.
- Every year in Scotland, children are hospitalised for the treatment of flu or its complications.
- The flu virus spreads through the air when people cough or sneeze, or by touching surfaces where it has landed then touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Flu can lead to complications that may result in hospitalisation or even death.

### Symptoms of flu

Children get similar flu symptoms to adults. These symptoms are worse than a normal cold and may include:

- stuffy nose, dry cough and sore throat
- fever and chills
- aching muscles and joints
- headache
- extreme tiredness.

These symptoms can last between two and seven days. Some children have a very high temperature, sometimes without other obvious symptoms, and need to go to hospital for treatment.

## Flu can be very serious

In some cases flu can lead to complications. These can include:

- bronchitis
- pneumonia
- painful middle-ear infection
- vomiting
- diarrhoea.

Flu can be even more serious for children with health conditions (for example asthma, heart, kidney, liver, neurological disease, diabetes, immunosuppression or a spleen that doesn't work fully), and can make their condition worse.

In the worst cases, flu can lead to disability and even death.



**The flu vaccine helps protect your child against flu and reduces the chance of your child spreading the virus.**

## What are the benefits of the flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine helps protect your child against flu, which can be a very unpleasant illness.

It will reduce the risk of your child spreading flu to friends and other members of your family who are at greater risk from flu, such as grandparents or people with health conditions.

It can help your child avoid days spent ill in bed rather than being at nursery or taking part in day-to-day activities.



# The flu vaccine

The flu vaccine is a painless nasal spray that is the best available protection against flu.

## Where and when will my child get the vaccine?

All children aged 2 to 5 years on 1 September 2019 (and not yet in school) should get the flu vaccine at their GP practice from October 2019. **Contact your GP practice to make an appointment for your child.**

The earlier your child can get the vaccine, the better.

## How is the vaccine given?

A tiny amount of the flu vaccine is given as a nasal (nose) spray into each nostril (see below). It's not an injection. It's quick and painless and there's no need to sniff or inhale the vaccine. Your child will just feel a little tickle in their nose.



## Is the vaccine safe?

Before they're allowed to be used, all medicines (including vaccines) are tested for safety and effectiveness. Once they're in use, the safety of vaccines continues to be monitored.

The nasal spray flu vaccine has been used successfully and safely for several years and millions of doses of the vaccine have been given to children in the last five years in the UK.

## Will the vaccine cause any side effects?

As with all medicines, side effects to the nasal spray flu vaccine are possible but are usually mild and may include a headache and muscle aches.

Some, but not all, children may experience a runny or blocked nose. Less common side effects include a nosebleed after the nasal spray vaccine. These are much less serious than developing flu or complications associated with flu.



**Visit [www.nhsinform.scot/childflu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/childflu) for a link to the full patient information leaflet, which lists vaccine ingredients and possible side effects.**

## How well does the vaccine work?

The flu vaccine should start to protect most children about 10 to 14 days after they get their immunisation. It is therefore important to get them immunised as early as possible.

The annual vaccine offers protection against the most common types of flu virus that are around each winter.

Over the last few years, the nasal spray flu vaccine has worked very well at protecting young children against flu. It has also reduced the chance of them spreading flu into the wider community.



## What if my child is ill on the day of their appointment?

Your child should not have the vaccine if they're very unwell (for example, with a fever, diarrhoea or vomiting). **If this happens, phone your GP practice to arrange another appointment.**

If your child's asthma is worse than usual in the three days before their vaccination, meaning they are wheezing more or have had to use their inhaler more than they normally do, tell the healthcare worker at their appointment. **There is no need to delay their immunisation, and they should be offered an alternative injectable form of the vaccine.**

## Can the flu vaccine give my child flu?

No, the flu vaccine can't give your child flu. The virus in the vaccine has been weakened so that it doesn't cause flu. It helps your child build up immunity to flu.

## Does my child need a second dose?

Almost all children will only need one dose of the vaccine. The boxes below show when children will need a second dose (four weeks after the first dose) to make sure their immunity has built up fully.

**A second dose is only needed if your child is under 9 years old and getting the flu vaccine for the first time and...**

Has a health condition

or

Is given the injectable vaccine

Your GP or practice nurse will be able to tell you if your child needs a second dose, and where and when to get it.

## Will my child be protected for life?

No, your child will need to have the flu vaccine every year. Flu viruses are constantly changing and a different vaccine has to be made every year to ensure the best protection against flu. This is why the flu vaccine is offered every year during autumn and winter.





## Are there any reasons why my child shouldn't have the nasal (nose) spray vaccine?

An alternative injectable form of the vaccine is available for children who can't have the nasal spray vaccine. This includes children who:

- have their immune system suppressed because they are getting treatment for serious conditions, such as cancer, or if they have had a transplant
- have a serious condition which affects the immune system, such as severe primary immunodeficiency
- are taking regular high doses of oral steroids
- have had a severe reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine
- are undergoing salicylate treatment (taking aspirin).

Children with an **egg allergy can safely** have the nasal spray vaccine, unless they have had a life-threatening reaction to eggs that required intensive care.

The nasal spray vaccine may not be suitable for some children with **severe asthma** who regularly need oral steroids for asthma control. Your GP will explain this.

The nasal spray vaccine contains a small trace of **pork gelatine**. Many faith groups, including Muslim and Jewish communities, have approved the use of vaccines containing gelatine. The nasal spray vaccine is much more effective than the injectable form of the vaccine in children.

However, if you don't want your child to get the nasal spray vaccine for religious reasons you may request the injectable alternative. Please discuss this with your GP or practice nurse.

## Where can I get more information?

Visit [www.nhsinform.scot/childflu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/childflu) for more information and to watch a film of the nasal spray flu vaccine being given to children.

You can also talk to your health visitor, practice nurse or GP, or call the NHS inform helpline on **0800 22 44 88** (textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88). The helpline is open every day and also provides an interpreting service.

The screenshot shows the NHS Inform website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for 'NHS inform' and 'healthier scotland'. Below the search bar, there are several menu items: 'Illnesses and conditions', 'Symptoms and self-help', 'Tests and treatments', 'Healthy living', 'Care, support and rights', and 'Scotland's Service Directory'. The main content area is titled 'Child flu vaccine' and includes a table of contents with five items: 'Overview', 'The vaccine', 'Children aged 2-5 years old', 'Primary school children', and 'After the vaccine'. The 'Overview' section is expanded, showing text about the vaccine's purpose and safety. Below this, there is a section titled 'Who's being offered the vaccine?' with a list of eligible groups. On the right side, there are additional links for 'Also on NHS inform', 'Other health sites', and a 'Live Support' button.

**Child flu vaccine**

1. Overview
2. The vaccine
3. Children aged 2-5 years old
4. Primary school children
5. After the vaccine

**Overview**

The flu vaccine helps protect your child against flu and reduces the chance of them spreading the virus to others.

The vaccine doesn't cause flu.

**Who's being offered the vaccine?**

The flu vaccine's offered to all:

- children in Scotland aged 2-5 years (and not yet in school) at their GP practice (children must be aged 2 years or above on 1 September 2019 to be eligible)
- primary school children at school

**Also on NHS inform**

Self-help guide: Flu like illness

Flu

**Other health sites**

Vaccine Knowledge Project: Nasal flu vaccine

**Live Support**

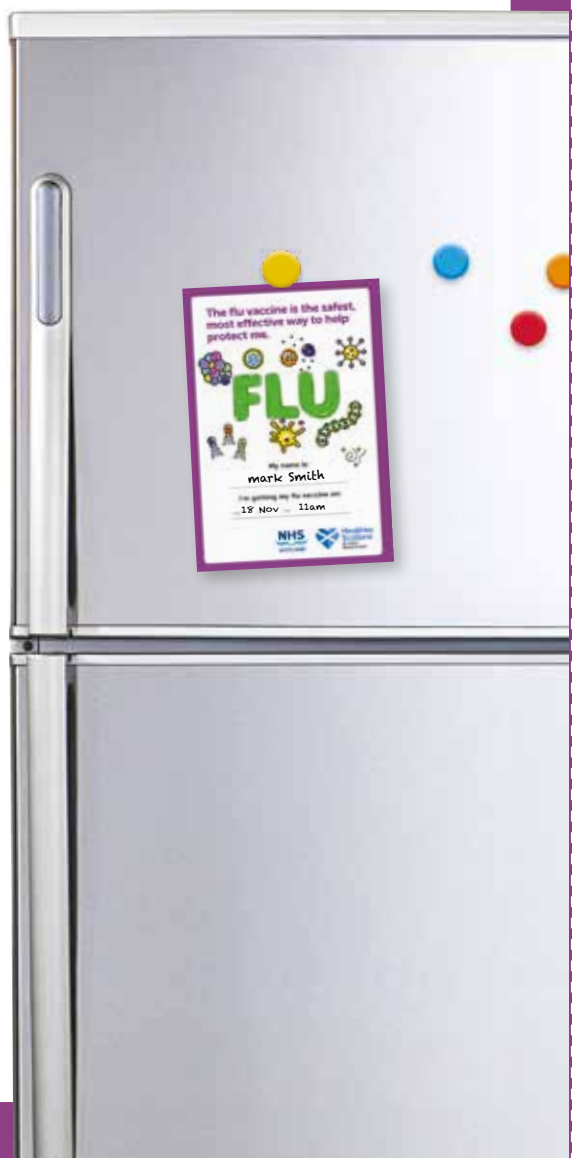
Chat to an NHS specialist  
Online now

# Trust the facts. **Get the vaccine.**

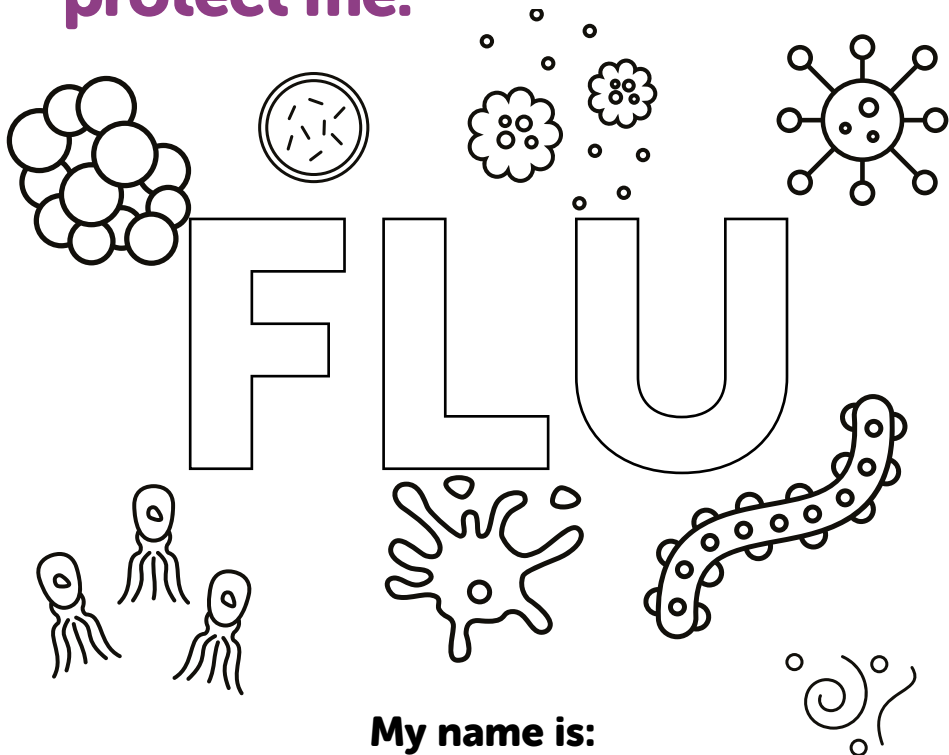
The flu vaccine is the safest, most effective way to protect your child.

Use the tear-off sheet opposite to write down your child's flu vaccine appointment details and stick it up as a useful reminder.

- 1) Book your child's flu vaccine with your GP practice**
- 2) Tear off and ask your child to colour in**
- 3) Stick up your reminder**



**The flu vaccine is the safest, most effective way to help protect me.**



**My name is:**

.....

**I'm getting my flu vaccine on:**

Date

Time

.....




**Healthier  
Scotland**  
Scottish  
Government

When to immunise	Diseases protected against	Vaccine given
8 weeks old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) and hepatitis B (HepB)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six-in-one (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pneumococcal disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pneumococcal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotavirus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotavirus</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meningococcal group B (MenB)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MenB</li> </ul>
12 weeks old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, Hib and HepB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six-in-one (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotavirus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotavirus</li> </ul>
16 weeks old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, Hib and HepB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six-in-one (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pneumococcal disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pneumococcal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MenB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MenB</li> </ul>
Between 12 and 13 months old – within a month of the first birthday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hib and meningococcal group C</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hib/MenC</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pneumococcal disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pneumococcal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measles, mumps and rubella (German measles)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMR</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MenB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MenB</li> </ul>
<b>Every year aged 2 until the end of primary school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Influenza (flu)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flu</b></li> </ul>
3 years 4 months old or soon after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and polio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four-in-one (DTaP/IPV)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measles, mumps and rubella (German measles)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMR (check first dose has been given)</li> </ul>
11 to 13 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) including cervical cancer (in women), and some head and neck and anogenital cancers (in men and women)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HPV</li> </ul>
Around 14 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tetanus, diphtheria and polio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Td/IPV, and check MMR status</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meningococcal groups ACWY</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MenACWY</li> </ul>

This resource may also be made available on request in the following formats:



Please make sure the parents of children who speak other languages are aware of where to access these alternative formats.

 [www.nhsinform.scot/childflu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/childflu) – click **Further Information** to access this leaflet in many other languages including **Mandarin (Simplified Chinese), Polish and Arabic.**

 **0131 314 5300**

 [nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net)

**Mandarin** 提供简体中文（普通话）版本

**Polish** Dostępny w języku polskim

**Arabic** متاح باللغة العربية

You have rights in relation to the access and the use of your personal health information. For more information about your rights or how the NHS uses your personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, you can phone the NHS inform helpline free on **0800 22 44 88** (textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88) and ask to speak to a healthcare adviser or visit:

[www.nhsinform.scot/confidentiality](http://www.nhsinform.scot/confidentiality) and  
[www.nhsinform.scot/data-protection](http://www.nhsinform.scot/data-protection)