**IT’S FLU JAB TIME AGAIN!**

Flu can be serious, or even life-threatening. The NHS provides free vaccination every year for people who are at higher risk of getting seriously ill with flu, to protect them from its worst effects. You can have the jab if you:

* are aged 65 or over
* have certain long-term health conditions
* are pregnant
* live in a care home
* are the main carer for an older or disabled person, or receive a carer’s allowance
* live with someone who has a weakened immune system.

Most eligible adults will be able to get their vaccination from 3rd October, as starting then will give the best protection during the time when flu is most widespread. However, some people may be given theirs in September if they are:

* pregnant, or
* due to have treatment which will weaken the immune system, because the vaccine works better if it is given when your immune system is stronger.

If you think you may need to have your jab before October, ask your GP practice for advice.

Eligible patients can get their NHS vaccination from a GP surgery, a pharmacy that provides it or maybe through their maternity service or care home.

You can have the flu vaccine at the same time as other vaccines such as covid or shingles, and you need to have a dose every year as the virus keeps changing.

You can’t have the flu jab if you’ve had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine or an ingredient that’s in it, or if you’re allergic to eggs (as some vaccines contain egg protein). And if you’re unwell at the time, wait until you’re feeling better before having your flu jab.

*Sent by Dr Virmani and Dr Bedi’s patient participation group*