



# PATIENT NEWSLETTER



Your quarterly update from Lancaster Medical Practice



Check your eligibility for flu and COVID-19 vaccines and book now at [nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](https://nhs.uk/wintervaccinations)

Dalton Square | Galgate | King Street | Meadowside | Owen Road | Rosebank | University

## PROTECT YOURSELF FROM FLU THIS WINTER

The arrival of the colder months can make us more vulnerable to respiratory illnesses and bugs. Give yourself the best chance of staying well this winter by getting your flu jab.

The flu vaccine is recommended for people at higher risk of getting seriously ill from flu, and is given to patients during autumn and winter. You can get the flu vaccine at the practice if you:

- are aged 65+
- are pregnant
- are aged 2 or 3
- live in a care home for older adults
- are immunosuppressed
- are aged 18–65 in a clinical risk group
- are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person, or receive carer's allowance, or are a close contact of an immunocompromised individual. ▶



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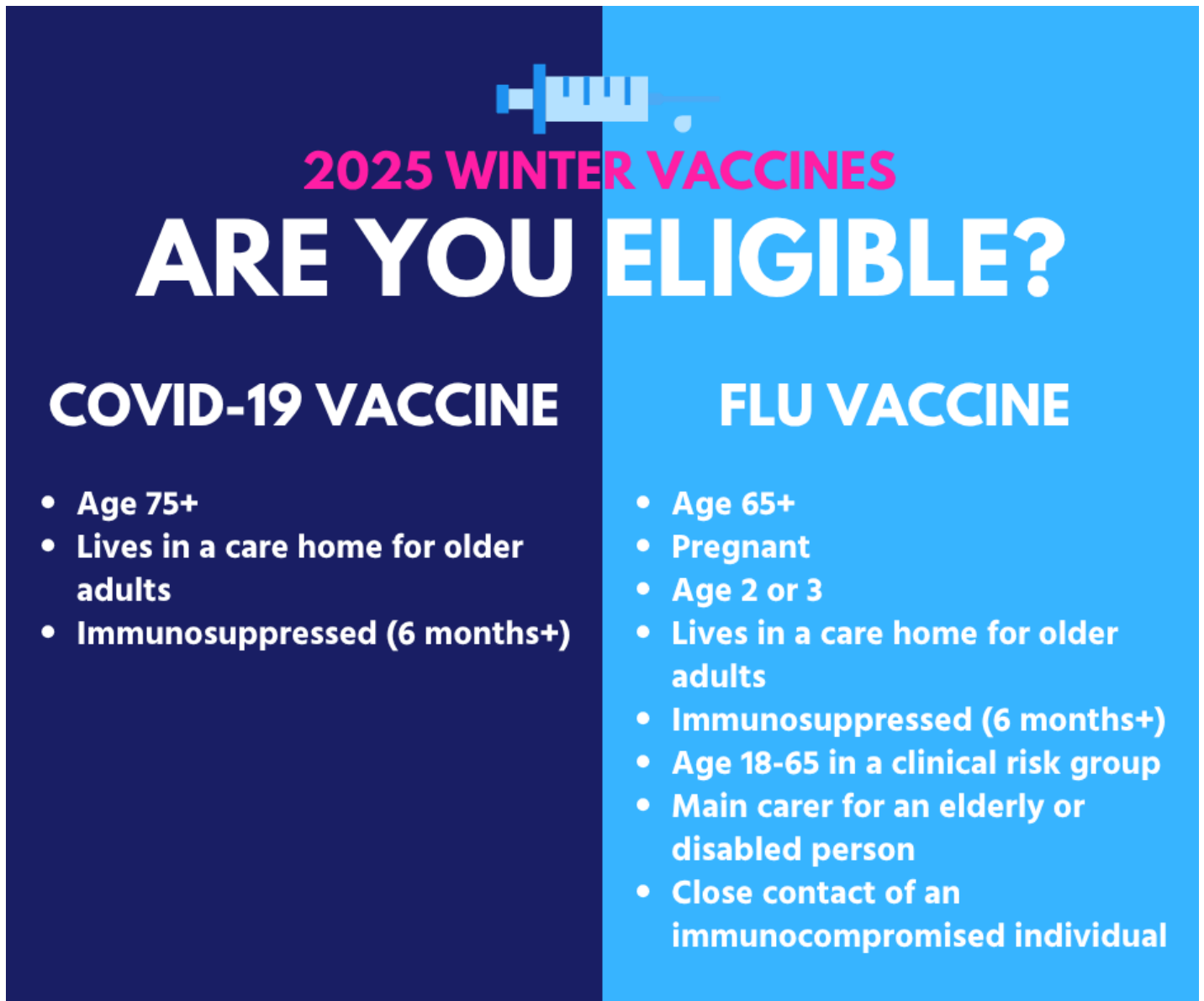
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- Flu appointments are available now and can be booked via the NHS App, by calling the practice on 01524 238150, or by visiting reception at any of our sites.

If you are aged 75 or over, you are also eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This can be administered at the same time as your flu vaccine should you wish to receive it.

Remember that flu and COVID-19 can be serious for some people! Getting your winter vaccines if you are eligible means that your symptoms will be milder and you will recover faster, should you run into these viruses over the winter.



**2025 WINTER VACCINES**

# ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

## COVID-19 VACCINE

- Age 75+
- Lives in a care home for older adults
- Immunosuppressed (6 months+)

## FLU VACCINE

- Age 65+
- Pregnant
- Age 2 or 3
- Lives in a care home for older adults
- Immunosuppressed (6 months+)
- Age 18-65 in a clinical risk group
- Main carer for an elderly or disabled person
- Close contact of an immunocompromised individual

Found in  
**33.6 million** pockets  
across England

Search 'NHS App'



# THE LATEST ON CERVICAL SCREENING

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NHS England have confirmed that the cervical screening programme will be updated so that eligible 25–49 year olds are invited every 5 years instead of every 3 years. We understand that some patients may be concerned by this news, so let's break it down.



## **Cervical screening today is much more sensitive and better at detecting risk earlier**

This change comes following an improvement in the screening test which was introduced in 2019, and now looks for high-risk strains of HPV (human papillomavirus), which is the root cause of 99.7% of all cervical cancers. Previously, the test only looked for abnormal cell changes in the cervix.

## **The interval between tests only changes for patients that are at low risk and get a HPV-negative result**



The invite changes to every 5 years ONLY IF the routine smear test shows the patient is HPV-negative. For patients that test negative for HPV, the risk of developing cervical cancer in the next 10 years is extremely low.

If the test shows the patient is HPV-positive, the cells are tested for abnormal changes. If there are no cell changes, the patient is invited back in one year. If there are abnormal cell changes, the patient is referred for a colposcopy.



## **This change is a science-backed step**

NHS England have made this decision based on recommendations made by the UK National Screening Committee following their review of screening evidence and safety data.

UK modelling and trials have shown that five-yearly HPV screening is as safe as the three-yearly traditional screening of abnormal cells. Scotland made the change to the five-year interval in 2020, and Wales in 2022.

## **Have you already been told that your next screening will be in 3 years' time?**

Nothing will change for you. The change came in from 1 July 2025, so if your last smear was before that and you're aged 25 – 49, the time between your tests will still be 3 years. If you were screened after 1 July, your next test will be in 5 years' time.



## **Please remember that screening is for people without symptoms**

If you notice symptoms such as vaginal bleeding that's unusual for you, changes to vaginal discharge, pain during sex or pain in your lower back or pelvis, contact the practice – don't wait for your next screening.

The NHS Cervical Screening Programme has introduced digital invitations and reminders via the NHS App. This means quicker and more convenient access to cervical screening invites when screening is due.

**We would encourage everyone to download the NHS App and enable notifications. Tap the person icon (top right in the app), select Notifications (under Settings), and switch notifications on.**

For those where a digital invitation isn't possible, a letter will be posted as a backup.

# STAY WELL THIS WINTER

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The colder weather can aggravate existing health problems and make us more vulnerable to respiratory illnesses and bugs, but there are things you can do to stay well this winter.



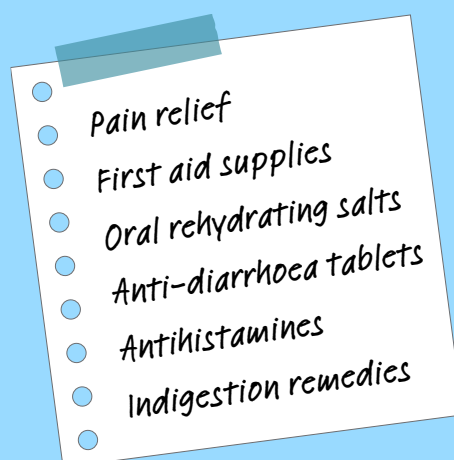
## GET YOUR WINTER VACCINES

The flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and those around you against the flu virus, which can make some people seriously ill. The COVID-19 vaccine is also available for people aged 75+, those that live in a care home for older adults and immunosuppressed people. Check your eligibility for the flu or COVID-19 vaccine on our website (or on page 2) and book your appointment via the NHS App, by calling 01524 238150 or visiting reception at one of our sites.



## STOCK YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

Do you have the right medication available in case you need it? Over-the-counter medicines are great at relieving symptoms of common winter illnesses. Take a look at our handy list and make sure you stock up – you never know when you might need them.



## THINK PHARMACY FIRST

Your pharmacist is a qualified healthcare professional that has the clinical knowledge to get you the help you need. They can offer advice and the right treatment for a whole range of conditions and can even prescribe medication for seven common conditions: sinusitis, sore throat, earache (in children), infected insect bites, impetigo, shingles, and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.



### Get advice if you feel unwell

Go to your pharmacy, contact the practice, call NHS 111 (out of hours) or 999 in an emergency.



### Keep warm to protect your health

You may be entitled to grants and benefits to make your home more energy efficient.



### Check on vulnerable neighbours and relatives



### Practice good hand hygiene

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap to avoid illness.



### Protect your mental health

If you've not been feeling yourself for a while, support is available. Contact the practice if you're struggling.



# WHAT TO EXPECT: CONTACTING US ONLINE

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- **Puzzled by Patchs? Need help with the NHS App? Here's our handy guide to contacting the practice online**








**THERE ARE  
3 WAYS  
TO CONTACT THE  
PRACTICE**



**NHS  
App**

**LOOKING TO CONTACT US ONLINE?  
DOWNLOAD THE NHS APP!**

**YOU CAN USE THE NHS APP TO:**

-  **ORDER REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS**
-  **CHECK YOUR GP HEALTH RECORD**
-  **VIEW UPCOMING AND PAST APPOINTMENTS**
-  **VIEW MESSAGES FROM THE PRACTICE**
-  **VIEW REFERRALS AND TEST RESULTS**
-  **BOOK SOME TYPES OF APPOINTMENTS**
-  **VISIT NHS 111 ONLINE**






**DID YOU KNOW?  
YOU CAN ALSO USE THE  
NHS APP TO CONTACT  
THE PRACTICE ONLINE**

**THE NHS APP LINKS TO OUR  
ONLINE CONTACT SYSTEM  
CALLED**  
**patchs**

**DON'T HAVE THE NHS  
APP? PATCHS IS ALSO ON  
OUR WEBSITE  
(BUT - GET THE NHS APP &  
MANAGE YOUR HEALTHCARE  
IN ONE PLACE!)**

**NEED MEDICAL  
ATTENTION?  
USE PATCHS**

**NEED TO MAKE AN  
ADMIN REQUEST  
SUCH AS REQUEST  
A FIT NOTE? USE  
PATCHS**

-  **CHOOSING ONLINE CAN BE QUICKER THAN CALLING OR VISITING, ESPECIALLY DURING BUSY TIMES**
-  **ONLINE REQUESTS ARE TREATED THE SAME AS IF YOU CONTACTED US BY PHONE OR IN PERSON. BOTH URGENT AND ROUTINE REQUESTS CAN BE MADE ONLINE**
-  **YOU CAN CONTACT US ONLINE 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK - BUT WE WILL RESPOND ONLY WHEN WE'RE OPEN**
-  **DO NOT CONTACT US ONLINE TO REPORT EMERGENCIES LIKE CHEST PAIN, BREATHING DIFFICULTIES OR LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS. CALL 999 OR GO TO A&E**
-  **ONLINE IS JUST ONE WAY TO REACH US. IF YOU CAN'T CONTACT US ONLINE, CALL OR VISIT INSTEAD!**

# NEWS FROM OUR PRACTICE SITES

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➤ The latest on what's happening across LMP!



Do you want to know more about our Patient Participation Group (PPG)?

Steph, our PPG Chair, will be holding a drop-in to talk to patients, get their feedback and tell them about our PPG.

Join her on Friday 14 November between 10am and 11am at Owen Road.



Need help registering for the NHS App or with fixing a glitch in Patches? Our Informatics team will be on hand to help at our digital drop-ins. Visit them on the following dates:

- Thursday 20 November @Galgate (2pm - 3pm)
- Tuesday 9 December @Rosebank (2pm - 3pm)



Lancaster University has installed an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system across campus which also covers University Health Centre.

To avoid a parking charge, patients are advised to enter their vehicle registration number into the tablet at reception upon arrival. Thank you for your cooperation.

 HM Government



Taking your bra off  
at the end of the day feels great

And so does getting your breast screening sorted

It can detect cancer long before you can even feel it. Or more likely, put your mind at rest. So when you're invited, **save the date, it could save your life**

Screening  
saves  
lives

Help us  
help you

# YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT

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- How have you found your care at the practice recently? Here's a look at your patient feedback for the last quarter, between July and September 2025.

## NHS FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

Would you recommend us to your friends and family? The NHS Friends and Family Test is a very short and simple survey that you can complete to provide anonymous and honest feedback about the care you have received at the practice.

Between 1 July and 30 September, we received NHS Friends and Family feedback from  
**5,079 patients**

Of these responses,

**95.9% of patients**

rated our service as good or very good

### Words that patients frequently used to describe the practice in their feedback



A more detailed analysis of the Friends & Family results are available on our website.

## LET US KNOW

There are different ways that you can let us know your feedback.

**Rate your satisfaction through the NHS Friends and Family Test. Do this via text message after an appointment, through our website or by paper form**

**Don't have a complaint but you have some thoughts or suggestions about how we could improve? Fill in a paper feedback form and post it in the postbox at one of our sites**

**Not happy with the care you have received or our actions to resolve your concern? Full details on making a formal complaint can be found on our website**



## REMEMBER, REMEMBER THIS BONFIRE NIGHT

- Only buy fireworks from licensed sellers
  - Read instructions carefully
  - Keep fireworks out of reach of children
  - Use only one firework at a time
  - Only use one sparkler at a time and never in a crowded space
- Stay at least 8 metres away from garden fireworks and 15 metres away display fireworks
  - Hold sparklers at arm's length
  - Never give a sparkler to a child under 5



**We're open Monday - Friday,  
8:00am - 6:30pm\***

If you need medical attention when we're closed and it cannot wait until we reopen, **call 111**

\*Some pre-booked appointments are available on evenings and Saturdays at selected sites



**There are different ways to  
contact us for medical help**

**Online** via a Patches form (find it on our website or via the NHS App)

**Call** 01524 238150

**Walk in** to one of our sites and speak to a member of our reception team



**We're occasionally closed for  
staff training**

Our scheduled closures for staff training over the coming months are **Thursday 16 October** and **Wednesday 12 November**.

We'll also be closed on **Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day**.



[www.lancastermedicalpractice.com](http://www.lancastermedicalpractice.com)

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 [@lancaster.medical.practice](https://www.instagram.com/lancaster.medical.practice)



**Download the NHS App**