

## **Don't forget to get your Flu vaccine**

If you are immunosuppressed or may become immunosuppressed, it's important that you get your flu vaccine.

### **Why is this important for you?**

People who are immunosuppressed, are more likely to become seriously ill if they catch flu and are nearly 50 times more likely to die from complications of having flu than healthy people.

### **You may be immunosuppressed;**

- **If you are having** - Chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy
- **If you are taking medication** - Immunosuppressive or immunomodulating biological therapy, protein kinase or PARP inhibitors and steroid sparing agents – i.e. cyclophosphamide and mycophenolate mofetil or have been taking Steroids for more than a month.
- **If you have had** - An organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant.
- **If you have been told you have** - HIV, multiple myeloma, leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma, lupus, or a genetic disorder which affects the immune system.

**\*Please speak to your GP, Practice Nurse or Consultant if you are unsure if you need a flu vaccine**

### **How can I protect myself?**

The best way to protect yourself from flu is to have your FREE Flu vaccine every year.

### **Where can I get my Flu vaccine?**

Everybody who is eligible for a Free Flu vaccine can get one at their **GP Practice** – Book your appointment as soon as possible.

You can also get your Free Flu vaccine from a **Community Pharmacy** – ask at your local pharmacy.

## **Carers**

If you receive a carer's allowance or are the primary carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare would be affected if you were ill, you can also receive a Free flu vaccine.

## **What is Flu?**

Flu is not just a bad cold

It is a very infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly. Symptoms include: fever, chills, headache, aches and pains and extreme tiredness, making you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Q. Will the vaccine give me flu?

A. No. The injectable vaccine contains an inactive form of the virus which cannot cause flu. Some people may have a sore arm and mild aches and pains which should only last 48 hours.

Q. Is the vaccine safe?

A. Yes. The vaccine is known to be very safe and can be given to babies and very elderly people with very few problems.

Q. Why do I need a Flu vaccine every year?

A. The flu virus can change every year. Flu vaccines are updated each winter to give protection against the strains of flu that are most likely to be going around. This is why it is strongly recommended that you get vaccinated every year.

Q. I think I have already had flu. Do I still need a vaccination?

A. Yes. There is more than one type of flu virus, the vaccine will help to protect you against other flu viruses.

Q. Can flu be treated with antibiotics?

A. No. Flu is a virus and the only way to be really protected is with a flu vaccine