**Together we can fight flu – key messages**

**Flu key messages**

* There has never been a more important time to make sure you, and those you care for, are protected against serious illness such as the flu.
* For some people **the flu can be serious** and cause complications making them very ill.
* The flu vaccine is available for **free to these people who are most at risk.**
* If you are eligible for a free flu vaccination, **your GP practice will contact you** byletter or text to book an appointment at your practice **or you can book a free jab at local pharmacy.**
* Get the flu vaccination, stay well and protect the NHS.

**Flu Symptoms**

* a sudden fever – a temperature of 38C or above
* an aching body
* feeling tired or exhausted
* a dry cough
* a sore throat
* a headache
* difficulty sleeping
* loss of appetite
* diarrhoea or tummy pain
* feeling sick and being sick

**Who is eligible to receive the free flu vaccine this year:**

* **Pregnant** women
* **Children** aged 2- 11 years old
* Member of a **shielding** household
* **65+** years old
* People with a **long-term health condition:**
  + a heart problem
  + a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or severe asthma
  + a kidney disease
  + lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment)
  + liver disease
  + had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
  + diabetes
  + a neurological condition, e.g. multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy
  + a learning disability
  + a problem with your spleen, e.g. sickle cell disease, or you have had your spleen removed
  + overweight (BMI of 40 and above)

**Booking an appointment**

If you are in one of the groups listed above your GP practice will contact you by letter or text to make an appointment at your practice or you can book a free jab at your local pharmacy.

Eligible patients over the age of 18 can now also book a flu vaccination at their local community pharmacy in one of three convenient ways:

* Telephone or visit the pharmacy of your choice and ask to book a flu vaccination
* Book your flu vaccination online at any local pharmacy other than Boots via <https://myvaccinations.co.uk>
* Book your vaccination at Boots online at   
  <https://www.boots.com/online/pharmacy-services/winter-flu-jab-services>

If you book at a pharmacy you don’t need to inform your GP. **Children**

Flu in children can be serious - it can cause high fever, painful ear infection, acute bronchitis, pneumonia and even hospitalisation. Give your child the free flu vaccine to help protect them and vulnerable family & friends.

For more information on flu vaccination and children click here - <http://bit.ly/child-flu>

**More information**

Visit <https://www.grenfell.nhs.uk/> or <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/>