

CROSS DEEP SURGERY



Bulletin—Extra

September 2017

GET THE NEEDLE Flu, Shingles and Pneumonia Jabs

Flu vaccination

Flu can be unpleasant but if you are otherwise healthy it will usually clear up on its own within one or two weeks. However, flu can be more severe in people within high risk categories and lead to potentially serious complications. Vaccinations are available every year on the NHS to help protect these people.

The NHS flu jab is available to -

- * people aged 65 and over
- * pregnant women
- * people with heart conditions and other cardiovascular disease
- * diabetics
- * people with lung disease (eg COPD, asthma)
- * people with weakened immune systems
- * people living in a residential care home or nursing home
- * people who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person

Children

The flu vaccine is routinely given on the NHS as an annual nasal spray to -

- * children aged two, three and four years old plus children in school years one, two and three
- * children aged two to seventeen years who are at a particular risk of flu

People who do not fall into the above categories may be vaccinated on a private basis—if you feel you might be entitled to an NHS vaccination please talk to your doctor.

Many pharmacies offer NHS flu injections. While there is no reason to doubt the merit of these schemes it is strongly recommended that you have your vaccination at the surgery. We can then be absolutely sure that your medical history is taken into account and that your records are updated. It often takes a long time for pharmacies to let us know who they have vaccinated and this can cause problems.



Flu vaccination clinics

We will be holding mass vaccination clinics on Saturday 30 September and Saturday 7 October—there will also be various weekday clinics throughout the vaccination campaign. If you are eligible for an NHS vaccination please contact Reception for an appointment.

Shingles vaccination

You don't "catch" shingles - it comes on when there's a reawakening of chickenpox virus that's already in your body. Anyone who's had chickenpox can get shingles and it's estimated that around one in five people who have had chickenpox go on to develop shingles at some time in their lives. People tend to get shingles more often as they get older, especially over the age of 70.

The NHS programme to vaccinate people in their 70s is being staggered over several years and if you are aged 75, 76 or 77 on 1 September 2017 you have not yet become eligible for an NHS shingles vaccination. Eventually, everybody in their 70s will have become eligible so, if you appear to be missing out, don't worry. Your turn will come.

From 1 September 2017 the shingles vaccine is routinely available on the NHS to -

- * people aged 70 and 78 on 1 September 2017
- * people aged 71, 72, 73, 74 and 79 on 1 September 2017 who were eligible in previous years of the programme but who did not receive a shingles vaccination

Anyone who is eligible but missed out on their shingles jab remains eligible until their 80th birthday. Anyone aged 80 or over is not eligible to have the shingles vaccination on the NHS—the vaccine seems to be less effective in this age group.

The vaccine is given as a one-off single injection. It can be given at any time of year but most people find it convenient to have it at the same time as their annual flu jab.

The shingles vaccination is available privately for anyone over the age of 50 but the vaccine is in very short supply and expensive. Expect to pay between £100 and £200. Your doctor can advise on whether it's safe for you to have it but you may need to visit a private clinic to have the vaccination.

Pneumococcal vaccination (known as the "pneumonia jab")

The pneumonia jab protects against more than pneumonia.

Pneumococcal disease is a term used to describe infection caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae* which can enter the human body through the nose and mouth causing sinusitis or middle ear infection—the infection can spread further to the lungs and to other major organs and cause much more serious conditions such as pneumonia, septicaemia and meningitis.

In the UK, babies are offered vaccination against pneumococcal disease as part of the routine childhood immunisation schedule. However some people require additional vaccination -

- * people aged 65 or over
- * those with long-term health conditions, such as a serious heart or kidney problems

For adults the pneumococcal vaccination is a one-off single injection. It can be given at any time of year but most people find it convenient to have it at the same time as their annual flu vaccination.



CARE - Pneumonia and shingles vaccines cannot be given together although either of them can be given with the flu vaccine. So, if you require all three vaccines you will need two separate appointments.