

Flu

Protect your

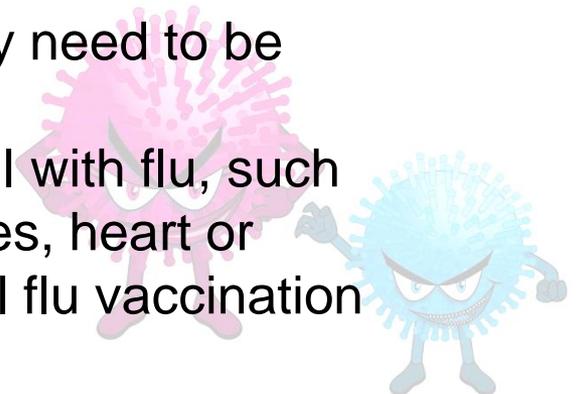


Why do children need to be protected from flu?

Flu is caused by viruses and spreads easily. Anyone can get flu but rates of infection are highest among children. It can cause fever, chills, aching muscles, headache, tiredness, blocked nose, cough and a sore throat, lasting up to a week.

Often children who get flu feel very unwell and need a few days in bed, and for some it can cause serious illness. Complications include bronchitis, pneumonia and ear infections. Some children get so ill they need to be admitted to hospital.

Children at highest risk of becoming very ill with flu, such as those with health conditions like diabetes, heart or lung disease, have been offered an annual flu vaccination for many years.



How does flu vaccine help?

Flu vaccine, especially the nasal spray for children, usually offers good protection against flu in the season it is given. Protection starts around two weeks after having it. Some people still get flu even after having the vaccine but often with milder symptoms. Flu vaccines do not protect against colds and other winter illnesses.



Flu vaccination gives children protection from flu and also helps to stop it spreading.

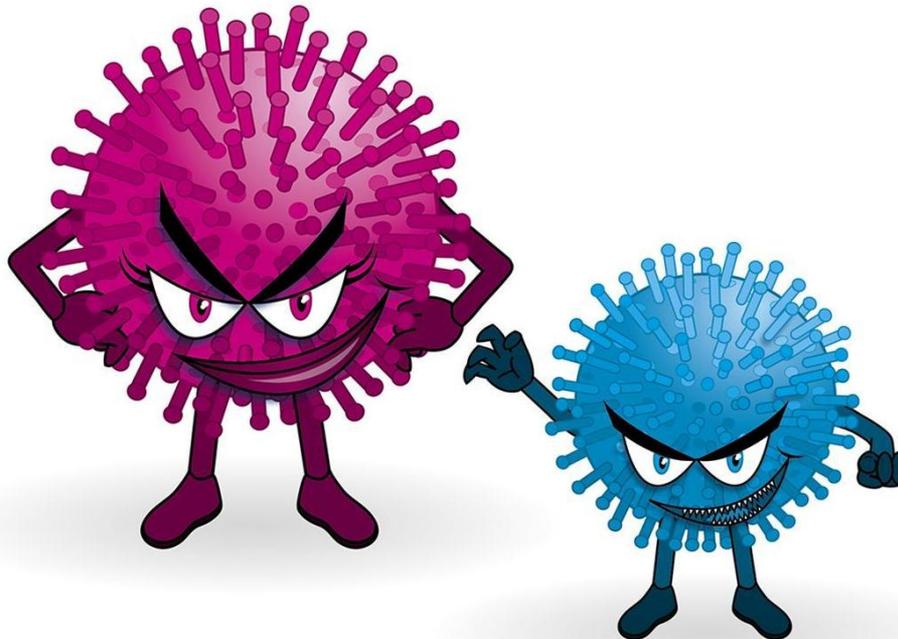
What kind of flu vaccine is given to children?

Most children can have a nasal spray vaccine which is given as a fine mist up the nose. A small number of children can't have the spray vaccine. They will be offered an injection by their Doctor instead, given in the arm.



How often is the flu vaccine needed?

A flu vaccine is needed every year to give the best protection. As flu viruses can change each year, the vaccine is changed to match them.





Are there any side effects from the flu vaccine?

Flu vaccines are very safe. Some children get a slight temperature, feel tired, have a headache, aching muscles or reduced appetite for a day or two after having a flu vaccine. The nasal spray may cause a runny or blocked nose. The injection can leave a sore arm. Other reactions are less common.

Flu vaccination is quick and safe and could prevent weeks of serious illness.

The flu vaccine will not cause flu.