

DETACH AND KEEP THIS  
LETTER FOR YOUR  
INFORMATION

Dear Parent/Guardian

### Reception to Year 6 Influenza Nasal Spray Vaccination 2019

The Influenza nasal spray vaccination is offered routinely to all children; in year groups Reception up to and including Year 6 in primary schools across East and West Sussex; as part of the national programme for vaccination of children and young people.

Your child will be offered the Influenza vaccine that is given as a simple spray up the nose. It is painless, very quick, and has minimal reported side effects. This vaccination programme is designed to protect your child against Influenza which can be an unpleasant illness. By your child having the Influenza vaccination, they will also help to protect those who are at a greater risk from Influenza including infants, older people and those with underlying health conditions who may not be able to have the vaccination.

#### Please complete the attached form:

- One form per child
- Complete the form in CAPITAL LETTERS and ensure you answer all the questions
- Include the child's full legal forename, legal surname and date of birth
- Return a form even if you do not want the vaccination
- Detach and return the form to the school within 7 days of receipt

Should you change your mind after you have returned the consent form, please put this in writing stating student's name, date of birth, school name and the change you wish to make. Give this to the school office marked 'Urgent for the attention of the Immunisation Service'.

Dates of Immunisation sessions in schools will be available on the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust website. If the vaccination is not given on the day, a letter detailing the catch up clinics the Immunisation Service run will be sent home via the school. Catch up dates can also be found on the trust website. Only children with a medical condition can have this vaccine at the GP surgery.

#### If your child has asthma, please ensure you read the section below.

If your child's asthma has worsened that:

- **Up to 14 days before vaccination they have required oral steroids or increased inhaled steroids**
- **Up to 3 days before vaccination your child has become wheezy**

Please inform the Immunisation Service **by letter**, including your child's name, date of birth, address; and give it to the school office on the morning of the vaccination session; before 9am.

Vaccination will be deferred in the above cases.

Yours sincerely

**Rosanna Raven**

**Immunisation Clinical Service Manager – Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust**

Speak to a member of the Immunisation Service by calling your local team on: 01273 696011

Brighton  
Ext. 3789

Chichester  
Ext. 8100

Crawley  
Ext. 2043

East Sussex  
Ext. 2080



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## Influenza Nasal Spray Vaccination FAQ's

### **What vaccine is being offered and why?**

The Fluenz Tetra nasal spray is the vaccine currently used for the childrens routine Influenza vaccination programme. It offers protection against four strains of the Influenza virus which are anticipated to be circulating in the UK this winter. The virus in the vaccine is live, but it has been weakened so that it cannot cause the illness in healthy people. It can reduce the circulation of Influenza and can protect the wider community, particularly those for whom Influenza poses a serious health risk

For the Patient Information Leaflet and further information visit: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/3296/pil>

### **What is Influenza?**

Influenza is an unpleasant illness causing fever, stuffy nose, dry cough, sore throat, aching muscles and joints, and extreme tiredness. This can last several days and may need hospital treatment. Serious complications include a painful ear infection, bronchitis, and pneumonia.

### **Safety**

The vaccine has undergone rigorous safety testing before being licensed for use in the UK. It is a well established vaccine with a good safety profile, and like all other vaccines unwanted reactions are constantly monitored.

### **What is 'shedding'?**

Vaccinated children are known to shed virus for a few days after vaccination, however unvaccinated children are not at risk of catching flu from the vaccine; either through being in the same room where flu vaccine has been given or by being in individual contact with recently vaccinated children.

The amount of virus shed is normally below the levels needed to pass on the infection to others and the virus does not survive for long outside of the body. This is in contrast to natural flu infection, which spreads easily during the flu season. The only exception to this would be the tiny number of children who are extremely immunocompromised (for example those who have just had a bone marrow transplant). These children are normally advised not to attend school anyway because of the much higher risk of being in contact with other infections, including the natural flu infection that spread in schools.

Children who have been vaccinated with the nasal spray should avoid household contact with people with very severely weakened immune systems for around two weeks following vaccination (for example those who are receiving chemotherapy).

### **Are there any side effects of the vaccine?**

Children may develop a runny or blocked nose, headache, tiredness and reduced appetite, lasting a few days. The vaccine is absorbed quickly so, even if your child sneezes immediately after having had it, there's no need to worry that it hasn't worked. Any other side effects are unusual. If you're worried about any reaction you can call the NHS 111 service.

### **Children should not have the nasal vaccine if they:**

- Are currently wheezy or have been wheezy in the past three days (vaccination should be delayed until at least three days after the wheezing has stopped).
- Are severely asthmatic, i.e. being treated with oral steroids or high dose inhaled steroids.
- Have a condition that severely weakens their immune system or have someone in their household who needs isolation.
- Have severe egg allergy however, children with a history of severe egg allergy should seek specialist advice. Please check with their GP.
- Are allergic to any other components of the vaccine – check the Patient Information Leaflet.

### **My child had the Influenza vaccination last year. Do they need another one this year?**

Yes; the Influenza vaccine for each winter has strains of Influenza that may be different from last year. We recommend that children should be vaccinated annually.

### **Does the nasal vaccine contain gelatine derived from pigs (porcine gelatine)?**

Yes, the vaccine does contain a highly processed form of porcine gelatine, to keep it stable and effective. There is no porcine free alternative available for children in the non 'at risk categories'.

The World Health Organisation and the Islamic Organisation for Medical Sciences advised gelatine derived from impure animals for use in medicines has been sufficiently transformed so as to make its consumption permissible. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/386842/2902998\\_PHE\\_FluPorcine\\_QAforParents\\_FINAL\\_CT.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/386842/2902998_PHE_FluPorcine_QAforParents_FINAL_CT.pdf)

### **What if my child only has the vaccine in one nostril?**

A spray in each nostril is to maximize contact with the cells in the nose. A single spray does induce an immune response.