

DRS LOWCOCK & VELTKAMP



Yes - it is that time of year again!

The flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. This is to ensure they are protected against catching flu and developing serious complications. You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you are:

- 65 years of age or over
- pregnant or have certain medical conditions :-
- chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma (which requires an inhaled or tablet steroid treatment, or has led to hospital admission in the past), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease or motor neurone disease
- diabetes
- problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medication such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy

This list of conditions isn't definitive.

- very overweight (BMI over 40)
- living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- receiving a carer's allowance
- The main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- a healthcare worker with direct patient contact, or a social care worker

The flu vaccine is also recommended for:

- children over the age of six months with a long-term health condition
- healthy children aged two, three and four plus children in school years one and two.

Children aged between six months and two years of age who are eligible for the flu vaccine should have the flu jab. Children eligible for the flu vaccine aged between two and 18 will usually have the flu vaccine nasal spray.

Reducing the amount of Waste Medication

We are currently having an unprecedented amount of returned medicines and we need to ask your help to reduce this waste which is costing the NHS a lot of money. We know that it is tempting to ask for an extra supply of medicines "just in case" but please would you make an extra conscious effort to look through your repeat medication order sheet and not order any items where you have enough. These could be medicines that you use only occasionally or, in a few cases have stopped taking altogether. If a particular drug is not agreeing with you please speak to your GP to discuss the problem and it may then be removed from your order list

Antibiotic resistance

Both the NHS and health organisations across the world are trying to reduce the use of antibiotics, especially for conditions that are not serious. This is to try to combat the problem of antibiotic resistance, which is when a strain of bacteria no longer responds to treatment with one or more types of antibiotics. Antibiotic resistance can occur in several ways. Strains of bacteria can mutate (change) and, over time, become resistant to a specific antibiotic. The chance of this increases if a person does not finish the course of antibiotics as some bacteria may be left to develop resistance. Also, antibiotics can destroy many of the harmless strains of bacteria that live in and on the body. This allows resistant bacteria to multiply quickly and replace them. The overuse of antibiotics in recent years has played a major part in antibiotic resistance. This includes using antibiotics to treat minor conditions that would have got better anyway. It has led to the emergence of 'superbugs'. These are strains of bacteria that have developed resistance to many different types of antibiotics.

Travel

A travel questionnaire must be completed before booking an appointment with Lindsay. Please complete the form at least 8 weeks before your travel date. If you are travelling within 6 weeks and have not made an appointment you may be advised that it is too late to see the practice nurse– you will be given the details of a travel clinic where you will be able to receive the vaccinations but may have to pay.

Private Letters

Please note that if you request a private letter for a service that is not covered by the NHS, you will be charged an administration fee. These are not considered a priority and may take over 14 days to process.