

Mitcheldean Surgery

FLU UPDATE

September 2018

Special Edition

This Newsletter contains important information relating to the forthcoming Flu Season.

PLEASE NOTE:

We will NOT be holding the Saturday morning Flu Clinics at the Mitcheldean Community Centre or Huntley Village Hall this year.

Changes for Flu 2018

For 2018 we will be changing the way in which our patients receive their annual flu vaccination. This is due to updated guidance from NHS England and in the way the vaccines are being delivered to us. This means that we will not be holding our annual Saturday morning flu clinics this year.

Why these changes are necessary?

This year, there are three different types of vaccine:

- For children and young people aged 2 to 17 years in an eligible group the vaccine is given as a nasal spray. This is known as a live attenuated quadrivalent vaccine (LAIV)
- For adults aged between 18 and 65 who are at an increased risk due to a long term health condition (see overleaf) the vaccine is given as an injection. This is known as a quadrivalent vaccine (QIV)
- For people aged 65 and over, this year there is a new vaccine which is given as an injection. This is known as a adjuvanted trivalent vaccine (aTIV)

There is only one manufacturer for the new vaccine for the over 65's who will be supplying every GP Practice in the Country. As a result of the change, our delivery dates have changed for this and also for the vaccine for the 18 to 65 age group.

We will be receiving our vaccines in three batches:

- The first delivery at the end of September
- The second delivery at the end of October,
- And the final delivery at the end of November.

Due to the way the deliveries are scheduled and the amount of vaccines we will have at any one time, we regret we will not be able to run the Saturday morning clinics as we usually do. Instead, we will be running a series of **appointment only** flu clinics here at the Surgery from early October through to early December.

In line with guidance issued by NHS England, we will be offering the first appointments to those patients who are considered medically to be in a higher risk group due to their age or health condition(s). This will ensure that those patients most at risk from the effects of flu are vaccinated first. We will then be offering appointments to other patient groups as soon as more vaccines are delivered to us.

Please be assured, there will be enough vaccines for everyone. This is not a vaccine shortage, it is simply a re-scheduling of the vaccine delivery dates. As a consequence, this may mean that you are unable to have your flu vaccination when you expect to, or when you would usually have it. Unfortunately, this situation is completely out of our control and affects every GP Practice in the Country.

How to get your Flu Vaccination

By Invitation Letter: We will write to those eligible patients with details of how to book your flu appointment when these become available, and you will need to have received this invitation letter before calling to book. In fairness to all patients, if you book a flu appointment and then do not attend, we will not be able to offer you a further appointment until after we have received our last delivery of vaccines.

Children aged 2 and 3 years of age: We will write to parents to advise when this vaccine is available and the arrangements for having your child vaccinated.

Housebound Patients: We will be making separate arrangements for those patients who are unable to get to the Surgery to be vaccinated.

Please **DO NOT** book a routine GP or Nurse appointment to get your flu jab. All the vaccines will be allocated to flu appointments and they will not be able to give this to you. You will be wasting your own time and also a GP or Nurse appointment.

If you need further information

If you need further information or have any questions about the flu arrangements for this year, please contact the Surgery and ask to speak to either Laura Weyman on 01594 545332 or Debbie Hope-Hill on 01594 545333 who will be happy to help.

At the time of writing, we have no information on how this will affect other organisations who offer flu vaccinations, such as local pharmacies or the big supermarkets. If you do decide to have your flu jab elsewhere, please ensure the details of this are passed back to the Surgery so we can ensure this is noted on your medical record. This will also stop us writing to you unnecessarily. Thank you for your understanding.

Check if you are eligible to receive an NHS Flu Vaccination

If you fall into one of the following groups, you are eligible to receive an NHS flu vaccination from the Surgery:

- Aged 65 years or over
- Live in a residential or nursing home
- Are the main carer of an older or disabled person
- Are a household contact of an immunocompromised person
- Are a frontline health or social care worker
- Are pregnant
- Children aged two and three years of age. Children of other ages should be offered the vaccine at school – please visit www.nhs.uk/child-flu for further information
- If you have a long term condition, such as:
 - A heart problem
 - A chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or severe asthma
 - A kidney disease
 - A lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment)
 - You are a newly diagnosed cancer patient
 - Liver disease
 - Have had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
 - Diabetes
 - A neurological condition, eg, multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy or learning disability
 - A problem with your spleen, eg, sickle cell disease, or you have had your spleen removed
 - Are seriously overweight (with a BMI of 40 or above)

The list of conditions above is not definitive. If you do not come into any of the categories above and feel you should have a flu vaccination, your GP will be able to advise.

Contact Us

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If you have any comments regarding the Surgery, please send these to us via the Contact Us page of our website, or contact Gayle Sykes, Practice Manager, on 01594 545320.