2020 Flu Vaccinations Your Questions Answered

Q. Does the 2020 flu vaccine protect against swine flu?
A. Yes it does. This year the swine flu vaccine has been incorporated into the annual flu vaccination.

Q. I am in the 'at risk group' and am entitled to a free vaccine. Can I get it through my company?
A. Yes you can if you wish but your company will have to pay for it and you should notify your GP that you have had the vaccine. Alternatively you can go to your own GP and get it for free.

Q. Friends have told me you can get flu from the vaccine and they know people who have
A. They may think they have had flu. The normal incubation period for flu is 10-14 days so if you have flu symptoms after the vaccination you were either having a mild reaction to the flu vaccination or already had flu when you were given the vaccination. It is impossible to catch flu from a flu vaccine.

Q. How successful at stopping flu is the flu vaccine?
A. No vaccine is 100% successful but the seasonal flu vaccine has a success rate of around 80% and therefore is well worth having as flu can put you in bed for a couple of weeks and it could be as long as 6 months before you feel fully fit again.

Q. My friend had flu last year after having had the flu vaccination and had to take a couple of days off work. I thought the vaccine was to stop you catching flu?
A. The vaccine is 80% successful in stopping flu, however it does not stop the common cold and if your friend was only off work for a couple of days they did not have flu. Proper flu symptoms are a high fever where you won't feel like getting out of bed, a headache and muscle ache and a feeling of nausea. You will probably be in bed for a week and not be feeling normal for a couple of weeks, it may then take up to 6 months before you feel fully recovered. Flu is a nasty virus you will know if you have it and many people who didn't have a flu vaccine in the past now do because they know how ill they can be.

Q. I have an allergy to chicken and eggs, can I have the flu vaccine?
A. No there are certain groups of people who can't have the flu vaccine; they include those people who are allergic to chicken and eggs, antibiotics Gentamicin, Polymyxin B, Neomycin, Kanamycin (you will already know if you were allergic to these) and pregnant women who have not yet reached their first trimester. If you are feeling unwell at the time of the vaccination you will also be refused the vaccine by our nurse.

Q. Does your nurse check your medical status before giving the vaccine?
A. Yes. The nurses / pharmacists are fully trained in flu vaccinations and will ask you a series of questions to ensure that you are suitable and have no contra indications before giving you the vaccine.

Q. Why is my company offering free flu vaccinations?
A. Flu vaccinations are one of the most cost effective ways of protecting the workforce from a major flu virus attack; it also shows that they take a responsible approach to looking after their employees.

Q. Can my company insist that I have a flu vaccination?
A. No. Vaccinations are given on a voluntary basis but you would be well advised to take up your companies offer.

Q. I had a flu vaccine last year will that not protect me this year?
A. No. The make-up of the flu vaccine is determined each year by The World Health Organisation which looks at influenza outbreaks around the world each year and then decides what the vaccine will contain. A flu vaccine only protects you for 6 months and is designed to cover the highest risk period being the winter months. The 2019 vaccine will be the quadrivalent version recommended by the Dept of Health.

Q. I am pregnant, can I have the flu vaccination?
A. Yes, providing you have passed your first trimester.

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