

BEAT FLU... BEFORE IT BEATS YOU!



Catching flu can mean **BiG** problems for your little ones... So are you ready to **BEAT FLU** with your 2, 3 or 4 year old this winter?



What is flu, and is it serious for my child?

Flu is a very infectious viral illness which circulates every year, usually in the winter. Some people think flu is just a bad cold, but it isn't; flu is worse than that.

Most people who are fit and well generally recover fully from flu infection, but for some people, especially little ones, flu can cause serious illnesses and lead to needing hospital treatment.

Flu spreads easily - especially in environments like playgroups - and flu can kill.

What are the symptoms of flu?

Flu symptoms start suddenly and can be severe. They usually include fever, chills, headaches and aching muscles, and often a cough and sore throat.

How can I protect my child?

Children aged 2, 3 or 4 (on 31st August 2014) are eligible for a free flu vaccine, to help protect them.

The preferred vaccine for children aged 2 years and over is a nasal spray vaccine, given as a fine spray into the nostrils. There are a small number of children for whom the nasal spray vaccine is not suitable. These children will be offered a flu injection instead.

Children aged 2, 3 or 4 will be vaccinated at their GP practice, so phone and make an appointment.

Can children of other ages be vaccinated?

In future years, flu vaccine is expected to be offered to all children aged 2 to 16 years, but this is being introduced in phases.

For the current flu season (2014-15), the vaccine is only available to those aged 2, 3 or 4 years of age on 31st August 2014, those in school year 7, as well as children aged 6 months of age or over at increased risk of being very ill with flu due to a medical condition or treatment.

Why are children being offered a nasal spray?

The nasal flu vaccine (Fluenz® Tetra) is more effective than a flu injection in protecting children aged 2 and over against flu.



Will my child get any side effects from the vaccine?

Flu vaccines are very safe. Some children get a slight temperature, feel tired, have a headache, or aching muscles for a day or two. The nasal spray may cause a runny or blocked nose. Other side effects are very rare.

TOP FACTS!

- 2, 3 and 4 year olds get the nasal flu vaccine for free from their GP
- No nasty needle!
- Call your GP surgery and make an appointment for your 2 – 4 year old today



CASE STUDY

Rhys Watkins, 3 years old



Three year old Rhys Watkins, from Rhiwbina, Cardiff is beating the flu bugs this year. He has been to his GP with his mum and had the nasal spray flu vaccine. Most children aged two – four, in school year seven or aged two and over with a medical condition that increases their risk of being very ill from flu should have this instead of the traditional flu ‘jab’.

Sarah Watkins, Rhys’s mum, explains why she didn’t waste any time in getting him protected from flu: “Flu is awful for adults, so I wouldn’t want Rhys to get it as he’d be miserable - and so would I!

“Children pick up so many illnesses from nursery as it is, and because flu spreads easily, if we can do something to protect them I’m all for it.”

Rhys also had his flu nasal spray vaccine last year, when he was two, meaning he was amongst the first group of children who were eligible to have the vaccine for free.

This year, the programme has extended to include four year olds, as well as two and three year olds, and school year seven pupils.

“Rhys was absolutely fine with the nasal spray - it was over in seconds, and he had no side effects at all,” explains Sarah. “I also got the flu jab whilst pregnant to protect Rhys and I, and would urge all mums, and mums to be, out there to do the same.”



IF WE CAN DO SOMETHING TO PROTECT THEM I’M ALL FOR IT



HAVE YOU PLAYED ‘BEAT FLU!’?

Why not have fun playing our online game with your little ones and learn a little more about flu too? Beat the bugs online, then go along to your local GP surgery and beat the bugs for real with the nasal spray vaccination!

Access free via WWW.BEATFLU.ORG and our [FACEBOOK PAGE](#).



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