# **Seasonal Flu 2025 FAQs - The Influenza ‘Flu’ Vaccination**

Got a question that isn’t answered? Email us at [flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk)

**General:**

* [Am I eligible for the flu vaccine?](#Eligible)

Eligible staff are those that have been identified by managers as frontline staff, who have regular contact with at-risk groups such as vulnerable older people and adults or children with disabilities or certain medical conditions. Offering these staff a vaccination helps to protect our most vulnerable residents and the services we offer them.

If you are not eligible through the work scheme, you can check whether you are eligible through the [NHS flu vaccination programme.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/)

* [I’m fit & healthy, would I still benefit from a flu vaccine?](#healthy)

Healthy people can still develop severe complications as a consequence of flu and are advised to take up the offer of vaccination. You can also carry and pass the virus to others without having any symptoms yourself, so it’s especially important to be vaccinated if you are working with vulnerable people or have family or friends who are vulnerable.

* [I’ve heard stories about people who got the flu vaccine and then still got the flu. Does the vaccine work?](#ineffective)

While no vaccine can offer 100% protection, flu vaccines are the easiest and most effective protection against flu. If you take up the flu jab offer, you will be better protected, less likely to become seriously ill, and less likely to pass on the flu to others.

* [Does the vaccine give you flu?](#givesyouflu)

It’s impossible to get flu from the flu vaccine because it does not contain a live virus. You might experience mild side-effects such as soreness, swelling or aching muscles following the vaccination but this is usually an immune response to the vaccine and is nothing to worry about. It can take up to 14 days for the vaccine to work so there is the possibility that you could catch flu before you’re protected. Getting vaccinated early in the flu season will help to protect you before the number of flu cases increase.

* [If I get flu, can’t I just ask for some antibiotics](#antibiotics)?

Influenza is a virus and antibiotics do not work on viral infections. Preventing flu with vaccination is much easier than treating it.

* I had flu before and I wasn’t particularly ill. Why should I get a vaccine?

The flu virus mutates every year, which means that the vaccines need to be updated every year. Just because you were not very ill in the past, it doesn’t mean that you would not become ill if you caught a different strain in the future. We also know that, like Covid-19, some people can have flu with mild symptoms or, in some cases, no symptoms at all but still have the potential to infect others who may develop a serious or life-threatening illness.

* [I feel that I have built up sufficient immunity to flu over the years. Do I still need a vaccine?](#immunity)

Flu strains change every year so it’s important to get your vaccination every year. The flu jab will only protect you for the current flu season, even if you’ve had flu or been vaccinated in the past.

* [I don’t like needles and injections but I’d like a flu vaccination. Will it hurt? And can you help?](#phobia)

Many people feel some hesitation to being vaccinated due to a fear or dislike of needles. We will do our best to help and support anyone who comes to one of the on-site clinics. The nurses who administer the vaccines are experienced vaccinators who can answer any questions and allay any concerns. They will provide a calm, friendly environment to talk through your concerns and will ensure you feel comfortable and confident. Appointments are usually offered at 5-minute intervals but we will do our best to accommodate any requests for some extra time (email us at [flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk)).

Over the years, we have had very positive feedback from staff. Here are just a few examples from your colleagues who have been vaccinated in the past:

* It was really easy, very quick, far more convenient than going to my GP.
* It hardly took any time from my working day to get vaccinated.
* I didn't have to wait long and was seen by a male vaccinator who put me at ease immediately as he was warm and friendly. I wasn't worried about it at all but I can imagine some people would have been and his approach was just right.
* The pharmacist who gave it, Dave, was very good at making you feel at ease, highly recommended.
* Staff booking in and the nurse giving vaccinations were very kind, friendly and funny. Made the situation welcoming and pleasant.
* Very quick and simple. The nurse was really reassuring, and it was painless.
* I really appreciated the ease of having an on-site appointment.
* [I’m not sure if I’ll go through with getting the flu vaccination, should I book an appointment or request a voucher?](#notsure)

Participation in the NCC flu vaccination programme is completely voluntary and you should not feel obligated or under any pressure from managers or peers to participate. However, we encourage all frontline staff to be vaccinated as the evidence shows it is safe, effective, and beneficial. If you would like more information before making your decision, please contact us at [flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk) or by calling 0115 977 2130 and we will try to provide further information in confidence. If you have any questions or concerns on the day of your vaccination, the vaccinator will be able to help.

If you make the decision to get a flu vaccination, you can either book an appointment or request a voucher.

* Is the vaccine supplied the same as the one my GP is offering?

This year there are several different vaccines available for those 65 years of age and over, those aged over 50 or 60 who are in a clinical risk group, those aged between 18 and 50 who are in a clinical risk group and individuals who are pregnant.

The range of vaccines available reflects the research into vaccine efficacy for different ages/risk groups. These vaccines are available as part of the NHS Influenza vaccination programme.

The vaccine offered at our clinics is an inactivated egg-based vaccine. Individuals in any of the groups mentioned above can have this vaccine as long as there are no true contraindications (allergy, significant current illness) but are advised to have the one for their recommended age/risk group as it is likely to be more effective. This can be discussed with the nurse at clinic if you wish.

* [Are there any side effects to the flu vaccine?](#_Are_there_any)

The flu vaccine is proven to be the most effective and safest way of preventing flu. Like most vaccines, there are common side effects which are mild and resolve within 1 to 2 days.

These can include:

* pain or soreness where the injection was given
* a slightly raised temperature
* an aching body

More serious side effects such as a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) are very rare. The person who vaccinates you will be trained to deal with allergic reactions and treat them immediately.

* [Why can’t you start sooner and offer clinics earlier in the year?](#sooner)

The vaccine is developed each year to tackle the flu strains in the current flu season. That means we cannot obtain any vaccines from the manufacturers and suppliers any earlier in the year. Our on-site clinics are scheduled as early as possible when vaccines will be available.

* Do I have to wait between getting my flu vaccination & other vaccinations e.g. my Covid booster?

It is fine to give flu and most other vaccinations together, so as soon as you’re offered the flu vaccine you can have it, regardless of when your last vaccine was. The sooner you’re vaccinated, the sooner you’re protected!

The flu vaccine is not usually given at the same time as the RSV vaccine – please consult with your doctor or nurse for advice.

* [My doctor keeps hassling me even though I’ve had my flu jab at work. Can you tell them I’ve had it?](#tellgp)

The County Council’s flu vaccination programme is an occupational scheme so while the vaccinations provided offer equivalent protection they are classed as a private vaccination so details are not passed on to your GP. The vaccinator will give you the information to pass on to your GP though if you want to let them know.

* I’m not feeling well on the day of my appointment, should I still get my flu vaccination?

It’s the time of year when there are coughs & colds circulating. It’s fine to have your flu jab if you have a mild illness but if you have a fever, temperature or productive cough, it might be better to wait until you’ve recovered. If you’re not sure, come & see us in the clinic where you can get some advice from the vaccinator.

* [I think I may be eligible for a free flu vaccination though the NHS. What should I do?](#NHS)

You may be eligible for a free flu vaccination through the NHS if you are in an at-risk group or over 65. If so, you can choose whether to get your vaccination at work or through your GP or pharmacy - the most important thing is to get vaccinated.

A list of those eligible for a free vaccination on the NHS can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/who-should-have-flu-vaccine/>.

* [How else can I help support the flu programme?](#whatelse)

We would welcome any help and support to encourage friends and colleagues to get their flu vaccination. Please feel free to talk with others about your own experience of getting the vaccination. It may help ease their concerns or provide reassurance that it is the right decision for them.

You might ask the people you care about if they’ve had their vaccination. If they haven’t, signpost them to the intranet page or to their GP or local pharmacy. If they’re worried about the vaccination you can also suggest that they look at the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/) for more information.

Everyone has the right to accept or refuse a flu vaccination and they should be provided with the right information to make an informed decision. It’s important that everyone understands the risk that flu poses and that the vaccine has been proven to be the safest and most effective way of preventing flu.

* [What happens to my data?](#data)

**Workplace sessions data**

For booking purposes, your name will be shared with a third party (Kays Medical), provider of the on-site flu vaccinations on behalf of NCC.

At the time of receiving your flu vaccination, you will be required to share personal data. The personal data will include name, date of birth and details of any medical conditions including allergies. NCC will not hold, process or have access to any of this data. Kays Medical will only process your personal data in accordance with the Law and, in particular, the Data Protection Act 2018. The data will also not be used for any marketing purposes. For more information, please see [Kays Medical Privacy Policy](https://www.kaysmedical.com/privacy-policy/).

**Voucher scheme data**

For voucher booking purposes, your name and the email address and/or mobile number that you provide will be shared with a third party (Flu Express), who will then issue you with an electronic flu voucher by email. This third party will only process your personal data in accordance with the Law and, in particular, the Data Protection Act 2018. The data will also not be used for any marketing purposes.

For further information, please refer to the [NCC Corporate Privacy Notice.](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/global-content/privacy)

**Booking/Amending/Cancelling Appointments:**

* Do I need to make an appointment for a flu vaccination and how do I do this?

Yes, you need to make an appointment for a workplace flu vaccine. We do have the capacity to facilitate some drop-in appointments on the day of the clinics, however, we can’t guarantee a vaccination if you haven’t booked. You will also need to make an appointment at participating pharmacies if using a voucher. Details on how to do this will be included with the voucher.

Appointments are available at a range of different County Council venues, during work hours. For details on the venues, dates and how to book an appointment, [visit the flu vaccinations page](https://home.nottscc.gov.uk/working/wellbeing/work-support/flu-jab).

If you don’t have access to the intranet, you can email [flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk) or call 0115 977 2130 to book an appointment.

* [How long will my appointment take?](#_How_long_will)

The appointment will only take 5 minutes and is held in County council bases, therefore, it is very convenient and does not require much of your time!

* [I booked an appointment but I need to re-arrange it. What do I do?](#_I_booked_an)

Don’t worry, you can easily cancel or change your appointment. Go to your original booking confirmation email and there will be an option to change the date/time/location of your appointment. If you are struggling to do this, please contact [flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:flu.vacs@nottscc.gov.uk) and we can help you.

**Flu Voucher FAQs**

* [Should I get vaccinated at the clinic or request a voucher?](#_Should_I_get)

The choice is completely yours and you should pick what is more convenient for you. You will be receiving the same flu vaccination and be seen by equally skilled and qualified staff.

* [How do I request a free flu voucher?](#howtogetavoucher)

If you are eligible, please [submit a flu vaccination voucher request (Microsoft Forms)](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=uzdabmGpT066rieYoiRfMKNZurxJewhNoLxd_2B1PFRURURUNEdTVzlUTzc4OTQ3VEROOFRJTkdDVy4u&route=shorturl).

Flu-Xpress vouchers will be sent on email so you will need to give an email address.

We don’t share your details with anyone else but it will be up to you to make an appointment with a [participating pharmacy](https://pharmacies.flu-xpress-bookings.co.uk/) and to give them your voucher code when you go. All the information you will need will be in the email you receive along with your voucher code.

Please make sure you do actually use the voucher – they are paid for in advance by the County Council and we cannot claim the money back once issued.

* [How will I get the voucher?](#vouchersend)

Vouchers are emailed to you directly, either at your work or personal email address, whichever you provide. If you don’t have an email address, you can ask your manager to request a voucher on your behalf.

* [Is there an expiry date on the voucher?](#expirydate)

Yes, vouchers expire on **31 March 2026** but the earlier you and the people around you are protected, the better.

* Can [I ask for a voucher just in case I get flu. I won’t use it unless I need to](#justincase).

The vaccination helps to stop people getting the flu and passing it on to other people. It does not help or offer any protection once somebody has already caught the virus.

The vouchers are also paid for in advance so not using them takes away valuable resources, without offering any benefit to those people we care for.