

Welcome to the Stay Well This Winter e-zine brought to you by the Public Health Agency and the Health and Social Care Board.

What is Stay Well?

This is the third year of Stay Well, which is about encouraging people to take positive steps and plan ahead so they are prepared to face the winter in better health.

Get the free flu jab

The PHA is urging all eligible people whose health could be seriously affected by flu to get the free flu vaccine. GPs across Northern Ireland are offering flu vaccination to **everyone over 65, pregnant women, and people under 65 with underlying health conditions.**



Last year, seasonal flu activity was the highest seen since the 2009 pandemic, with 119 cases of flu in intensive care/ high dependency units (ICU/HDU) – more than twice as many as the previous year – and a total of 22 deaths in ICU/HDU in which a diagnosis of influenza was confirmed.

This year sees two new and more effective vaccines being introduced to improve the protection offered to those at risk: a vaccine for older people (aged 65 and over) called Fludax®, which has been specifically designed to increase immunity in this age group, and a quadrivalent vaccine for people aged under 65 who have underlying health conditions and pregnant women.

Everyone who is eligible for the new vaccine should make themselves aware of their own GP surgery's flu vaccination arrangements. By working with surgeries' schedules, people who are eligible to receive the vaccine can help ensure that it can be given to everyone in a timely manner.

How you can help us?

- **Retweet** and **share** our social media posts
- **Post Stay Well messages** on your social media pages
- Use **#StayWellNI** when promoting any flu or winter care issues
- Encourage those eligible to get a flu jab
- **Print** copies of our posters

“THE FREE FLU VACCINE OFFERS THE BEST LINE OF DEFENCE AGAINST THE ILLNESS.”

SIR MICHAEL MCBRIDE
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

Do you have a long-term health condition?

Last year only 57.1% of people in a clinical risk group took up the offer of a free flu jab.

DIABETES

LIVER OR KIDNEY DISEASE

ASTHMA

HEART DISEASE

LOWERED IMMUNITY
due to disease or treatment such as steroids or cancer therapy.

NEUROLOGICAL CONDITION
such as stroke, multiple sclerosis or a condition that affects your nervous system.

ANYONE LIVING IN A
RESIDENTIAL OR NURSING HOME

CHILDREN AT RISK -
Children who have previously been admitted to hospital with a chest infection or
Children attending schools for children with severe learning difficulties.

Talk to your GP about getting your flu jab now.

“I GET THE FLU JAB EVERY YEAR. IT DOESN'T MAKE ME ILL AND I FEEL PROTECTED.”

RACHEL LEONARD,
PERSON LIVING WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES

STAY WELL THIS WINTER