



# SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE



## NEWSLETTER - FLU ISSUE

Autumn 2017, Issue 100

**AUTUMN 2017 FLU.** Welcome to our 'mini' newsletter, dedicated to the 2017 flu campaign which is underway. You will see posters in surgery and around the village, an article in the Henley Standard (along with other surgeries in our area), and those eligible who have their mobile number and/or e-mail address saved on their records will receive texts/e-mail messages from us.

**SO, WHO IS ELIGIBLE?** You are eligible for a free flu vaccination if you fall into any of these categories:

- ◆ Children aged 2 & 3 years;
- ◆ Aged over 65;
- ◆ Pregnant women;
- ◆ Registered carers;
- ◆ Care home residents;
- ◆ Aged 6 months to under 65 years and clinically at risk (because they have heart disease, chest disease, liver disease, neurological diseases or other immune problems).

*(Please see overleaf if you are unsure of your eligibility. If you are still not sure please ask your Nurse or GP)*

## FLU CLINIC DATES - please book an appointment with Reception.

Our clinics are by appointment only, and are not walk-in clinics.

~~Monday 18th September 12:30 - 14:00 pm~~

~~Wednesday 20th September 12:30 - 14:00 pm~~

~~Wednesday 20th September 17:30 - 19:00 pm~~

~~Monday 25th September 12:30 - 14:00 pm~~

~~Wednesday 27th September 12:30 - 14:00 pm~~

~~Monday 2nd October 12:30 - 14:00 pm~~

~~Wednesday 4th October 12:30 - 14:00 pm~~

~~Wednesday 4th October 17:30 - 19:00 pm~~

Wednesday 11th October 12:30 - 14:00 pm

Monday 23rd October 12:30 - 14:00 pm

### Adult and children clinic:

Sunday 22nd October 08:30 - 10:00 am

Sunday 5th November 08:30 - 10:00 am

## WHO SHOULD HAVE THE FLU JAB?

Flu is an unpredictable virus that can cause mild or unpleasant illness in most people. It can cause severe illness and even death among vulnerable groups such as older people, pregnant women and people with an underlying health condition. Certain people are more likely to develop potentially serious complications of flu, such as bronchitis and pneumonia. These people are advised to have a flu jab each year. For otherwise healthy people, flu can be very unpleasant. Most people will recover from flu within a week or two.

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you are 65 years of age or over, if you are pregnant, if you have certain medical conditions, if you live in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility, if you receive a carer's allowance, or if you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill. It is the employer's responsibility to arrange vaccinations for front-line health and social care workers.

**65's and over and the flu jab.** You are eligible for the flu vaccine this year (2017-18) if you were born on or before 31st March 1953. If you are 64 but will be 65 on 31st March 2018, you do qualify.

**Pregnancy and the flu jab.** Pregnant women are advised to have the flu vaccine, regardless of the stage of your pregnancy, because strong evidence suggests pregnant women have an increased risk of developing complications if they get flu. You will benefit from the flu vaccine because it reduces your chance of getting serious flu complications such as pneumonia (particularly in the later stages of pregnancy); it reduces your risk of a miscarriage, or your baby being born prematurely or with a low birth weight because of the flu and it will help protect your baby as babies continue to have some immunity to flu for the first few months of their life. It is safe to have the flu vaccine at any stage of pregnancy and the vaccine does not carry any risks for you or your baby.

**Those with medical conditions and the flu jab.** The flu vaccine is offered on the NHS to anyone with a serious long-term health condition including: chronic (long-term) **respiratory diseases**,

such as asthma (which requires steroid treatment, or led to hospital admission in the past), **chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)** or **bronchitis**, **chronic heart disease** such as heart failure, **chronic kidney disease**, **chronic liver disease** such as hepatitis, **chronic neurological conditions** such as Parkinson's disease or motor neurone disease, **diabetes**, problems **with your spleen** e.g. sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed, a weakened **immune system** as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medication such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy.

This list of conditions is not definitive and it is always an issue of clinical judgement. Your GP will assess you individually, taking into account the risk of flu exacerbating any underlying illness you may have, as well as your risk of serious illness from flu itself. In these cases, we would always offer the vaccine even if you are not technically in one of the risk groups above. If you live with someone who has a weakened immune system, you may also be advised to have a flu vaccine.

**Flu vaccine for children.** The flu vaccine is recommended for children over the age of six months with a long-term health condition and children aged two and three and children in years one, two and three at school. Children aged between six months and two years of age who are eligible for the flu vaccine are advised to have the flu jab. Children eligible for the flu vaccine aged between two and 17 will usually have the flu vaccine nasal spray.

**Health and social care workers.** If you are a front-line health and social care worker, you are eligible for an NHS flu jab to protect yourself, your colleagues and other members of the community but it is your employer's responsibility to arrange vaccination for you. If you are an NHS-employed front-line healthcare worker, the NHS will pay for your vaccination. If you are a social care worker, your employer should pay for vaccination. Private companies employing health and social care workers will arrange and pay for the vaccinations.

**Flu jab for carers.** If you care for someone who is elderly or disabled, speak to your GP about having a flu jab along with the person you care for.

*(taken from the NHS Choices website and edited - Ed.)*

## VACCINATIONS AGAINST PNEUMONIA AND SHINGLES.

**Pneumonia.** If you are over 65 you are also eligible to have a vaccination against Pneumonia. This is usually a one off vaccination. So if you have already had it, you wouldn't normally need it again.

**Shingles.** We are also offering the shingles vaccine and you will be contacted to come in for an appointment if you are eligible for the vaccine by your birthdate.