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Stay well this winter

Posted on Friday 13th October 2017

People living in Cumbria are being urged to have their flu vaccination and take steps to keep themselves well this winter.

Dr David Rogers, Medical Director at NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group said: "We are encouraging people who are eligible to take a moment to plan when they can have the jab. Many GP practices are running flu clinics at the moment so you can drop in and be seen quickly.



"The flu jab is a simple procedure which could ultimately save lives. Don't wait until there is a flu outbreak this winter; get your vaccination as soon as possible, especially if you are in an 'at risk' category."

The flu vaccine is available every year to protect adults, and some children, at risk of flu and its complications. It provides protection against strains of flu that are predicted to circulate each year, as these strains may be different from previous years.

Some patients are eligible to receive a free flu jab from their GP including:

- everyone aged over 65
- women who are pregnant
- patients who suffer from a chronic illness (such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- kidney disease
- hepatitis
- Parkinsons
- HIV and diabetes
- and children aged between two and seven years

Studies have shown that flu vaccinations will help prevent people from getting flu. Although the vaccine won't stop all flu viruses and the level of protection may vary from person to person. If you do get flu after vaccination it is likely to be milder and shorter-lived than it otherwise might have been.

Surgeries across Cumbria have recently hosted flu clinics for its patients, one of which is Longtown Medical Practice who have had great success with their clinics.

Claire Carswell, Practice Manager at Longtown said: "We sent out invites to all our patients in the 'at risk' groups in various ways.

"The uptake at our practice has been excellent so far and we are encouraging everyone to attend these flu clinics to prepare for the winter season and help protect their health.

"People just need to contact their surgery where they can make an appointment or book into one of the flu clinics."

Dr David Rogers added: "If you are entitled to get your jab, please take up the offer as soon as possible. Even if you had your jab last year, you will need to have one again, because flu changes every year.

“Real flu can be debilitating and if you are already living with a condition, you are either very young or very old it can hit you harder.

“All NHS staff are encouraged to get the vaccination which will also help to protect patients, colleagues and their families.

“The option of the nasal vaccination is available for children, ensuring that they are protected with this painless and effective process.”

The cold weather can often cause symptoms of illness, but many of them can be tackled by taking some simple steps and by visiting your local pharmacy. Here are some other simple tips to help you stay well this winter.

- Keep warm – If you have reduced mobility, are 65 or over, or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease, you should heat your home to at least 18C.
- If you have elderly relatives please make sure they are drinking plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

For further information on how you can keep well this winter including further advice, information and promotional campaign materials visit:

www.northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/winter

If you need medical advice you can call NHS 111 for free 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

A child health app is also available to download at app stores to offer advice for looking after your child's health. The NHS guide has been specifically designed for parents and carers of children aged 0-5 years. The app was designed by hospital specialists, doctors, health visitors and pharmacists to provide lots of useful hints and tips. Search for 'NHS Child Health'.

Keep up to date with news, advice and information from the NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group on social media through Facebook at: facebook.com/nhscumbriaccg and on Twitter at: twitter.com/NHSCumbriaCCG

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