

Kidney Patients – ‘Flu Warning!

For most people, Seasonal Flu and Swine Flu are nasty and only occasionally serious: a short period of chills, aches and pains and then a return to normal health.

But some people are at greater risk from the effects of flu. For them, either type of flu can increase the risk of more serious illnesses such as bronchitis and pneumonia or can make their existing condition worse. In the worst cases, a bad dose of flu can result in a hospital stay or even death.

People with CKD are at an increased risk of infections as the kidneys help prevent infection circulating in the blood. Due to your CKD, your immune system could be weakened, even if you feel well. This will make it much harder to fight off infections.

It’s also possible that your CKD could become worse. These are good reasons to think about having the vaccination. If you have Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) you are entitled to a free ‘flu vaccination.

Even if you feel healthy, you should definitely consider having these flu vaccinations. If you have a serious kidney disease or if you’re the main carer for someone with CKD, you can also be vaccinated.

Depending on the manufacturers, the seasonal vaccine should be available from October each year and the Swine Flu vaccination available year round. The sooner you

get your 'jab' the sooner you'll be protected – your body develops immunity in 7–10 days. 'Flu vaccines are very safe – side effects are unusual. Although it is still possible to catch 'flu' after vaccination the symptoms will be much milder and your recovery will be much faster.

Staff at your GP practice will be pleased to make an appointment for your vaccination.

For further information please see below

NHS Direct – 0845 4647

Kidney Health Information 0845 300 1499 kidneyhealth@kidneyresearchuk.org

Latest news (Feb2010) on [Swine Flu](#) from the DoH.

January 2010 update from the DoH on [Pandemic or Seasonal Flu](#).

The following leaflets are available from the DoH in a range of languages:

[Swine Flu Vaccination](#) – What you need to know

Swine Flu Vaccination for [Young Children](#)