



Sussex Flu Vaccination Update

17 November 2020

It's not 'just' the flu: get your flu jab now if you are pregnant

A senior nurse in Sussex is warning of the risks to pregnant women if they don't have their flu jab.

Catching flu is more than a cough, sore throat and runny nose and for pregnant women, it can cause serious complications including pneumonia and an increased the risk of a premature birth and low birth weight.

Pregnancy naturally weakens the body's immune system, which means flu can cause complications for pregnant women as they are less able to fight off infections, increasing the risk of them and their unborn baby becoming ill.

A mother passes antibodies onto the developing baby during pregnancy so getting vaccinated can also help to protect your baby after birth.

The flu vaccine can be given safely at any stage of pregnancy. It cannot give you flu because it does not contain any live flu viruses. Some people experience mild side effects such as a slightly raised temperature, aching muscles for a couple of days afterwards, or soreness at the injection site.

Allison Cannon, Chief Nurse Officer for Sussex NHS commissioners said: "The flu vaccination is more important than ever this year and you are eligible for a free flu vaccination if you're pregnant, to protect both you and your baby against the flu virus.

"The most common complication of flu in pregnancy is bronchitis – a chest infection that can become serious and develop into pneumonia. The virus can also cause premature births, low birth weight and even stillbirths. By having the flu jab while you're pregnant, you pass some protection on to your baby which lasts for the first few months of their lives.

"Midwives and other healthcare professionals have worked hard to make sure you can access safe maternity care during this time. So please make sure you have your flu vaccination and don't put off attending any of your antenatal appointments because of coronavirus. The NHS is here to see you, safely."

If you are pregnant, speak to your GP, midwife, pharmacist or maternity services to find out how to get the vaccination.

‘JUST’ THE FLU?



If you're pregnant, flu can harm you and your baby. The flu vaccine is your best protection.

JUST GET YOUR FREE FLU JAB

Ask your pharmacist, GP or midwife.



For a full list of priority groups and other information about this year's flu vaccine, visit www.nhs.uk and search for flu vaccine.

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