

Latest Advice

If you have flu-like symptoms and are concerned that you may have swine flu, the advice is to stay at home and check your symptoms at the [National Pandemic Flu Service](https://www.pandemicflu.direct.gov.uk/) <https://www.pandemicflu.direct.gov.uk/>

For people who do not have internet access, the National Pandemic Flu Service can be accessed by phone on:

Telephone: 0800 1 513 100

Minicom: 0800 1 513 200

Patients with swine flu typically have a fever or a high temperature (over 38°C / 100.4°F) and two or more of the following symptoms:

- unusual tiredness,
- headache,
- runny nose,
- sore throat,
- shortness of breath or cough,
- loss of appetite,
- aching muscles,
- diarrhoea or vomiting

Call your GP if:

- you have a serious underlying (existing) illness,
- you're pregnant,
- you have a sick child under one year old,
- your condition suddenly gets much worse, or
- your condition is still getting worse after seven days (five for a child).

We would urge anyone with flu-like symptoms to follow the usual steps of staying at home and contacting NHS Direct if they feel they need advice. NHS Direct can be contacted by calling 0845 46 47.

Anyone suffering from a cold or flu should remember the Catch It, Bin It, Kill It slogan.

CATCH IT - Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. BIN IT - Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of them as soon as possible. KILL IT - Hands can transfer germs to any surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.

For more information on the National Pandemic Flu Service, go to [Flu Service: questions and answers](http://www.staging.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pandemic-flu/Pages/QA.aspx#whatisthenational). <http://www.staging.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pandemic-flu/Pages/QA.aspx#whatisthenational>

From mid-October onwards, GP surgeries will start to invite people to have a vaccination against the pandemic flu virus. The following groups will be prioritised in this order:

1. People aged over six months and under 65 years in current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at-risk groups
2. All pregnant women, subject to licensing conditions on trimesters
3. Household contacts of people with compromised immune systems e.g. people in regular close contact with patients on treatment for cancer
4. People aged 65 and over in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at-risk groups. This does not include otherwise healthy over 65s, since they appear to have some natural immunity to the virus.

Vaccination of frontline health and social care workers will begin at the same time as the first at-risk group, and will continue for as long as necessary. This group is at increased risk of infection and of transmitting that infection to susceptible patients. Protecting these people will help the NHS workforce to remain resilient and able to treat sick patients.

People in these priority groups are encouraged to take up the invitation to be vaccinated. The pandemic flu vaccine can be given at the same time as the seasonal flu vaccine. To be fully effective, however, two doses of the pandemic flu vaccine are required, spaced three weeks apart.

Preparations continue to be made to extend the programme beyond these initial priority groups but as yet we do not have a timetable for this.

For more information on pandemic flu in Milton Keynes, go to the NHS Milton Keynes website: www.miltonkeynes.nhs.uk