

More information about Fluenz Nasal Flu Immunisation:

Are there any side effects of the vaccine?

Possible side effects are: decreased appetite, headache, a runny or blocked nose, or a mild temperature. These are common, but they pass quickly and can be treated with paracetamol or ibuprofen if you feel your child needs it. These are more common with the first ever dose of flu vaccine and should reduce with doses in the following years.

Are there any children who shouldn't have the nasal vaccine?

You should let us know if your child has any of the following:

A **very severe** allergy to eggs, egg proteins, gentamicin or gelatine – it is important for us to know if your child has been admitted to hospital with a condition called anaphylaxis, triggered by these things. Are currently wheezy or have been wheezy in the past **72 hours with asthma**. There is an alternative flu vaccine that we can talk to you about to ensure that your child is protected as soon as possible. Have a condition that severely weakens their immune system.

Also, children who have been vaccinated should avoid *close* contact with people with very severely weakened immune systems for around two weeks following vaccination. This is because there's an extremely remote chance that the vaccine virus may be passed to them.

Contact with other healthy children or adults does not need to be limited after having the vaccine.

Can the vaccine strain of flu be spread to others who have not been vaccinated? (Viral shedding)

Unvaccinated contacts are **not at risk** of becoming seriously ill with the weakened flu vaccine virus, either through being in the same room where flu vaccine has been given, or by being in contact with a recently vaccinated pupil. No 'mist' of vaccine virus escapes into the air and therefore, there is no need for any child or staff member to be excluded from school during the period when the vaccine is being offered or in the following days. The tiny number of children who are extremely immunocompromised (for example those who have just had a bone marrow transplant), are already advised not to attend school because of the much higher risk of contact with other infections that spread in schools.

Although vaccinated children do shed vaccine virus for a few days after vaccination, the virus is less able to spread from person to person than the natural infection. The amount of virus shed is normally below that needed to spread infection to others and the virus does not survive for long outside of the body. This is in contrast to natural flu infection, which spreads easily during the flu season. In schools where vaccine is being offered therefore, the overall risk of contact with influenza viruses is massively