



# Heads up from Health Protection- September 2025

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*This months edition includes:-*

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- *Seasonal Flu*
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## 2025/26 NHS Seasonal Flu Vaccinations

### Book Your Appointment Today!

The **National Booking Service is now open** for seasonal flu vaccination appointments starting from 1st October 2025.

The 2025/26 NHS Seasonal Flu Vaccination programme began 1st September for early eligible groups, with more people eligible from 1st October onwards. The programme runs until 31st March 2026, with a final booking date of 30th March. So don't wait – get ahead of flu season and protect yourself and your loved ones!

### Who's Eligible and When

#### From 1 September 2025:

- Pregnant women
- Children aged 2 or 3 years (on 31 August 2025)
- All primary school children (Reception to Year 6)
- All secondary school children (Year 7 to Year 11)
- Children in clinical risk groups
- A small number of adults following clinical assessment (e.g. those starting immunosuppressive treatment like chemotherapy)

#### From 1 October 2025:

- Adults aged 65 and over (including those turning 65 by 31 March 2026)
  - Adults aged 18 to under 65 in clinical risk groups
  - Residents in long-stay care homes
  - Carers and household contacts of immuno-compromised individuals
  - Frontline social care workers without employer-led occupational health schemes (including personal assistants and those working in care homes, domiciliary care, or hospices)

#### Healthcare & Social Care Workers:

All frontline health and social care workers who have contact with patients or vulnerable individuals should be offered the flu vaccine by their employer. Where this isn't possible, eligible staff may access the vaccine through the NHS National Booking Service.

### How to Book

You can book your NHS flu vaccination using the [NHS National Booking Service](#), or by calling 119.

Further information about the flu vaccine, including detailed eligibility criteria can be found on the NHS website: [Flu vaccine - NHS](#)

## Starting College Advice

Starting College is the beginning of a new and hopefully exciting chapter in your life, you may have more independence and be able to make more of your own choices, we want you to make the right choices to stay healthy and to achieve the best you can.

### **Vaccination is the MOST important thing we can do to protect ourselves against ill health (NHS)**

Hopefully you will be up to date with ALL your childhood vaccinations, which are usually delivered in Primary and Secondary school. For more information about the childhood vaccination schedule click [here](#).

If you're starting College, **PLEASE** check that you have been offered /had the vaccinations listed below. If you have missed any of the recommended doses or are unsure, contact your GP.

- The [MenACWY vaccine](#)
- Two doses of the [MMR vaccine](#)
- The [HPV vaccine](#)

The [MenACWY vaccine](#) protects against serious infections like meningitis. **Older teenagers and young adults are a higher risk of getting meningococcal disease, which, although rare, is very serious and requires urgent hospital treatment.** As in the case below, it can lead to life- changing disabilities such as amputations, hearing loss, brain damage and scars, so if you missed the opportunity you need to get vaccinated now to protect yourself. The vaccine is usually offered in school year 9 when you are 13/ 14 yrs old. Once you've left school you can still ask your GP for this vaccine, which is free until your 25th birthday.

[Protect yourself against meningitis and septicaemia with the MenACWY vaccine](#)

[Meningitis: I underwent multiple surgeries, including the amputation of several fingers – UK Health Security Agency](#)

## Measles



Measles is one of the most infectious diseases in the world and used to be a common childhood illness but, thanks to the MMR vaccination programme, it is now rare. However, over the past decade there has been a slow decline in the numbers of parents and carers getting their children vaccinated against MMR and other childhood diseases. Measles is highly contagious so even a small decline in MMR uptake can lead to a rise in cases, and 2024 saw the highest annual number of laboratory confirmed cases in England since 2012.

The MMR vaccine, given in 2 doses, protects against 3 serious infections, measles, mumps and rubella (or german measles). These are viral infections which spread quickly to non-immune children and adults who have not had their vaccinations or been previously infected.

### **Vaccination for older children and adults.**

You **need BOTH doses of the [MMR vaccine](#)** for full protection. Over 99% of those vaccinated will be protected against measles and rubella and although mumps protection is slightly lower, cases in vaccinated people are much less severe.

If you have not had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine, contact your GP surgery to book an appointment. **It is never too late to catch-up.**

It's important to **check you've had both doses** if you are:

- about to start college or university
- going to travel abroad (Countries around the world with low MMR vaccine uptake continue to experience large measles outbreaks and epidemics)
- planning a pregnancy
- a frontline health or social care worker

## Reasons to have the MMR vaccine

Not only will you protect yourself against 3 serious infections, but you will be helping to protect others who can't have the vaccine, including, unborn babies, infants too young to have the vaccine and children/ adults who can't have the vaccine because they have weakened immune systems.

For more information visit [-What is measles and why is it so important we're all up to date with our MMR vaccine? – UK Health Security Agency](#)

[Measles - NHS](#)

[Mumps - NHS](#)

[Rubella \(german measles\) - NHS](#)

## Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine

The HPV vaccine reduces your chances of getting human papillomavirus, a common virus spread through skin contact (usually when having sex).

Most types of HPV are harmless, do not cause symptoms and get better on their own, but some types can cause genital warts and abnormal changes in the cells that can sometimes turn into cancer. HPV types linked to cancer are called high risk types and cancers linked to high risk HPV include:

- cervical
- mouth
- anal
- penile
- vulval
- vaginal

Not only does the vaccine reduce your chances of getting HPV, but since its introduction evidence is clear that the HPV vaccine helps protect boys and girls from HPV-related cancers with a big drop in the number of young people getting HPV related cancers, such as cervical cancer and genital warts.

The HPV vaccine does not protect against other sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and condoms do not provide complete protection from HPV.

Research suggests that over time, the HPV vaccine, **together with cervical screening** will help save thousands of lives in the UK. However, even if you have been vaccinated against

**HPV it's still important to attend** cervical screening appointments offered women and people with a cervix aged 25-64, as there is still a small chance you could get cervical cancer.

### **HPV Catch up programme**

From 21st July 2025 to 31st March 2026, GP practices will be reaching out to unvaccinated 16–24-year-olds via texts, emails, and the NHS App.

### **Don't Miss Out – Book Your HPV jab Today!**

It's not too late to get protected. Anyone between the ages 16- 24 can access the vaccine. The NHS is aiming to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040 and getting more people vaccinated plays a big part. So, if you or someone you know, has missed the vaccine at school, now's the perfect time to book an appointment with your GP or on the NHS App.

Further information can be found at [HPV vaccine - NHS](#)

## Shingles Update

From 1st September 2025, eligibility for the Shingles vaccination programme will change, to allow all severely immunosuppressed people aged 18 years and over to receive the shingles vaccine. This is an expansion of the current severely immunosuppressed cohort, who until now became eligible from aged 50 years of age.

More information can be found at: [NHS England » Shingles vaccine to be offered to hundreds of thousands more immunosuppressed adults](#)

## Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) update

### **MEN reaching 65 (or if you haven't had your AAA scan) this is for you!**

In the [May bulletin](#) we covered abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening. Since then, a 65-yr old gentleman from Rossendale who felt well before he attended his appointment, has had lifesaving surgery following discovery of a potentially fatal 9cm aneurysm during his initial routine AAA screening.

Whilst rare, an aneurysm 5.5cm or over is classed as large and you will be referred to a vascular surgeon within 2 weeks.

Shaun said, '**this has saved my life**' and advises any man to get screened saying '**ignoring the screening invitation could be like playing Russian roulette with your life**'.

Men over 65 with additional risk factors like smoking, high blood pressure and a family history of aneurysms are particularly at risk.

Click [here](#) to read the full article or watch the video and hear about a similar experience.



## Cervical Screening Results via NHS App

From **September 2025**, the NHS Cervical Screening Programme will begin sending **digital results directly through the NHS App**, offering a faster and more convenient way to access important health information.

This change marks the next step in the ongoing digital transformation of the programme, following the successful rollout of **digital invitations and reminders** in June 2025.

### How the new system will work:

- **Negative test results:**
  - Patients will receive their result as an NHS App message and notification.
  - If the message is not read within 72 hours, a letter will be sent to their registered address as a failsafe.

This ensures you still receive your results securely, either digitally or by post.

- **Abnormal test results:** For now, these will continue to be communicated by post.

### What you need to know:

From September, anyone attending cervical screening should be made aware that their results may be delivered via the NHS App.

The NHS App gives you quick and secure access to your health information, anytime and anywhere. Using the app also reduces the risk of letters being delayed or lost in the post.

Download the NHS App for free from the **App Store** or **Google Play Store** and **enable notifications** to ensure results are received promptly.

[Download the NHS App](#)

For more information:

[Invitations, reminders and results communications – NHS Cervical Screening Administration Service](#)

# View messages about your care in the NHS App



- 👁 Turn on notifications for the NHS App to get messages from your trusted healthcare providers
- ✍ The NHS App messaging service is a simple and secure way to stay up to date
- ℹ You can also use these services by logging in through the NHS website



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## Meet the team





1 - image designed by AI copilot

**The Health Protection Team are getting out and about, speaking with local residents to raise awareness of the national screening and vaccination programmes available.**

**In September, we'll be at...**

*Lancaster Library - Wednesday 17th September (10.00am - 2.00pm)*

**In next months edition:-**

- Starting university health advice
- Breast Screening
- Bowel Screening
- Combined vaccine for measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (MMRV)

This information has been produced by the Health Protection team at Lancashire County Council

If you require a printable version of this Health Protection bulletin please email the team at [healthprotection@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:healthprotection@lancashire.gov.uk)

(Information correct at September 2025)