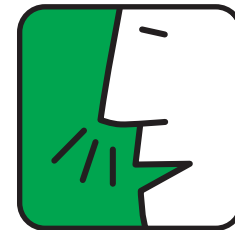



PROTECT YOURSELF

and millions of others



For more information: 

More advice on the impact of avian influenza on human health is available on the Scottish Executive website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/birdflu and the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk/

For advice on avian influenza and animal health, see the Scottish Executive website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/avianinfluenza



Flu Vaccine for people who work in close contact with poultry

Which poultry workers qualify for the free flu vaccine?



You are being offered seasonal flu vaccine because you are an owner of 50+ poultry, or because you work in close contact with large numbers of poultry. Poultry workers were added to the target groups for free flu vaccine in 2005. You will be offered a free flu jab every year for as long as you are working with poultry.

You can get the flu vaccine if you:



- Access areas where live poultry are kept for rearing or egg production purposes
- Catch or handle live poultry
- Collect and remove poultry manure or litter from poultry houses
- Work on a poultry slaughter line
- Clean and disinfect poultry houses and equipment

Why are you being offered a flu vaccine?



There is a possibility that you could be exposed to the avian influenza (bird flu) virus by coming into close contact with an infected bird. The virus does not pass easily from birds to humans, but if you happened to be infected with human flu at the same time, the viruses could mix in your body to make a new flu virus.

The new virus could potentially cause serious illness in other people. The vaccine reduces the very small risk of that happening, by making it less likely that you will have the seasonal flu virus in your body.

This vaccine will not protect you against bird flu. It will reduce your risk of getting the ordinary human flu that will be around this winter.

When should I have the flu vaccine?



Now, unless you are unwell and have a fever, in which case you should wait until you feel better. If you have already been vaccinated this winter you don't need to have it again until next winter.

Can the flu vaccine cause flu?



No. The vaccine doesn't contain any live virus, so it can't cause flu.

Will there be any side effects?



Some people get a slight temperature and muscle ache for a couple of days afterwards, and your arm may feel a bit sore where you were injected. Any other reactions are very rare.

You should not be vaccinated if you:



- Are allergic to hens' eggs
- Have had a severe reaction to flu vaccine in the past
- Currently have flu symptoms. You can have the vaccine when you are better
- Have already had a flu jab this year - but you should have it again next autumn

Although there is no evidence of risk from vaccinating pregnant women, or those who are breast feeding, with flu vaccine, poultry workers should defer vaccination until after the first three months of pregnancy. If you are pregnant and would like further information please call the NHS Helpline free on **0800 22 44 88** mentioning that you are pregnant.

For information about health issues and local health services, call the NHS helpline free on 0800 22 44 88 between 8am and 10pm seven days a week.

How can I avoid getting bird flu?



Avian flu is primarily a disease of birds. Avian flu viruses very rarely cause illness in people, but you can reduce the risk by making sure you pay attention to some simple hygiene measures, such as hand washing after contact with poultry, and before eating and drinking.