

12 December 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Vaccinations for your child before Christmas

With the Christmas school holidays approaching, there are still lots of appointments available for children's vaccinations for polio. Polio is a highly-infectious virus – which can cause lifelong paralysis – and it has been detected in London. The best way to protect your child is to get a polio booster vaccine or routine vaccination when invited.

Also as we head towards Christmas, getting your children vaccinated against flu gives them vital extra protection from this dangerous virus which spreads more easily when we spend more time with friends and family indoors.

Polio and other childhood immunisations

- The NHS has contacted parents of children aged one to nine offering a polio vaccine. For some children this may be an extra dose of polio vaccine on top of their routine vaccinations. In other children it may just bring them up to date. To book a child's polio vaccination, you have two options:
 - Your GP should have contacted you – follow their instructions to book an appointment with them.
 - Up until Christmas, you can also go to a special polio vaccination clinic. Visit the NHS North East London website for more information, including opening times: www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/polio
- It is important for young children and babies to complete their childhood immunisation programme for the best protection against infectious diseases including polio and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). If your child has missed a vaccine, contact your GP for a catch-up. Information on childhood vaccinations, and when to have them, is also available on the NHS website vaccinations page: www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/

Flu vaccinations

- The children's nasal spray flu vaccine is offered every year to children aged 2 to 17 to help protect them against the virus. Flu can be a very unpleasant illness for children and can lead to serious problems. Visit here for more information www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine
- Children aged two and three will be given the vaccination at their local GP surgery, usually by the practice nurse. School-aged children and young people will be offered the flu vaccine in school if they haven't already. For most children, the vaccine will be given as a spray in each nostril. This is a very quick and painless procedure. They'll be offered a flu vaccine injection if the nasal spray vaccine is not suitable for them.
- Most over fives can also get routine Covid-19 vaccinations. Visit here for more information www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations



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