

September 2015

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Circulated to:

Peritoneal Dialysis Patients

Haemodialysis Patients

Transplant patients

Patients on Immunosuppression

Chronic Kidney Disease Patients (CKD 2-5)

Seasonal Flu Vaccination

People aged over 65, as well as those in "high risk groups" which include those with kidney failure, nephrotic syndrome, renal transplants and others on immunosuppression (e.g. prednisolone, azathioprine, cyclophosphamide, ciclosporin, mycophenolate, tacrolimus) are advised to have the seasonal influenza vaccination.

All of our dialysis patients and many attending our renal clinics will therefore be candidates for influenza vaccination and we encourage you to have the injection every year.

Your GP has probably contacted you already, or should be contacting you soon, to arrange for this injection to be administered.

Pneumococcal Vaccination

The Department of Health also recommend pneumococcal vaccinations for patients with kidney failure, nephrotic syndrome, renal transplants and others on immunosuppression.

Antibody levels are likely to fall quickly in patients with chronic kidney disease. **Repeat vaccination with the pneumococcal vaccine is recommended once every 5 years.** If you have been vaccinated recently you should not need a second injection. If you have not had the injection before we recommend that you contact your GP to arrange for this to be done when you have your influenza vaccination.

Shingles Vaccination (Zostavax)

If you are aged 70 to 72, with your birthday from 2nd September 1942 to 1st September 1945, or aged 78 to 79, with your birthday from 2nd September 1935 to 1st September 1937 when the GP invites you for you flu injection you will also be asked to have a shingles vaccine. This is a new vaccine which is being slowly introduced. Due to the impracticalities of vaccinating everyone in their 70s at once it is being done in a staggered fashion. The vaccine does not work well on people over 79, and is therefore not offered to those 80 or over.

The vaccine is what we call a 'live' vaccine. This means that if you are taking steroid tablets (prednisolone) or medicines to suppress your immune system (for example cyclophosphamide) or you have had a transplant you must **not** have the shingles vaccination. For all other patients with kidney failure the vaccine is safe.

If you have any questions you are welcome to discuss this with any of the nursing staff or specialist nurses, renal pharmacist or with one of the doctors in clinic.

Yours sincerely

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