



BIMA
BRITISH ISLAMIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

FLU VACCINATION GUIDANCE

Why is it beneficial to get vaccinated?

- 1** You will help **protect yourself** from the possible severe complications which can be caused by flu. A flu vaccine can reduce the risk of getting sick by around 30-60%, and prevent children being admitted to hospital because of flu. You may still get flu after a vaccine but it is likely to be milder and not last as long.
- 2** Being vaccinated means you can reduce the pressures on healthcare services by lowering GP and A&E attendances and by **reducing hospital admissions**.
- 3** **Reduce the chance of flu outbreaks** and protect the most vulnerable who are at high risk.



What does Islam say?

Islam promotes the idea that the rights upon us extend to the people around us. The Prophetic teachings encourage us to be kind and make us aware that we should consider the implications of our actions. If you are young and healthy, you may not be severely affected by the flu **but you could pass it on to someone who is vulnerable**.

When it comes to choosing whether or not to vaccinate, it is important that we are empowered by the altruistic values our faith gifts us to make an informed and considerate choice



Not vaccinating could put yourself, your children, and others at risk

Do all flu vaccines contain pork gelatine?

No, there are two main types of flu vaccine:

1. The injectable vaccine **DOES NOT** contain porcine (pork) derived product and is **offered to adults**.
2. The nasal spray vaccine offered to children **DOES** contain porcine derived product.

Can Muslim parents choose which vaccine their child gets?

Yes, parents can choose to have the same injectable flu vaccine that is given to adults for their children, on the basis of religious objection. When asked to sign a consent form, let your vaccination service know your choice is because of the porcine gelatine in the nasal spray vaccine.

Most children are offered the nasal spray vaccine which is easier to administer and it may be better at preventing the spread of flu. Ask your doctor for further details so your child receives the most suitable vaccine. **Please consult a trusted scholar regarding permissibility as Islamic scholarly opinions differ.**

Where can I get a flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine should be available in schools, GP surgeries, pharmacies and other venues your local health team may advertise. **Those eligible include most children, older adults (aged 65+), those with certain health conditions and pregnant women.** Don't miss out.



SHOULD MY CHILD HAVE THE NASAL FLU SPRAY?

Influenza (or flu) is a common and highly infectious disease caused by different strains of the Influenza virus.

Each year vaccines are updated so that they protect against the commonest strains of flu, **saving thousands of lives.**

A flu vaccine can reduce the risk of your child getting sick by **30-60%**, and prevent children being admitted to hospital because of flu.

It will also reduce the chance of vulnerable people, such as grandparents or those with long term health conditions, getting flu from your child.



THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF VACCINES IN THE UK THAT PROTECT AGAINST FLU

1. NASAL SPRAY VACCINE



This will be offered to most school aged children, some pre-school children, and to children of any age with certain long-term health conditions. It is easy and quick to give.

The nasal spray vaccine **contains porcine (pork) gelatine.**

2. INJECTABLE VACCINES



All adults are offered this type of vaccine. Some children who cannot have the nasal spray because it is medically unsuitable will be offered this vaccine only.

The injectable vaccines **do not contain porcine derived products.**

Vaccination is a strong defence against a virus which causes severe illness and deaths every year



Young children, pregnant women, older people, and anyone with low immunity or certain health conditions (such as diabetes, heart or lung problems) are at higher risk from getting very sick with flu

Please do not delay a decision to vaccinate.

It is acknowledged by the NHS and public health that groups within British Muslim communities consider any porcine containing products to be forbidden, regardless of chemical transformation, whilst some allow it.

Children whose parents decline the nasal spray vaccine due to the porcine gelatine content **can request the injectable vaccine as an alternative.** This injection, which is also for adults and elderly, **has no porcine gelatine.**

Speak to a trusted religious scholar about having the nasal spray for your child if you have concerns about its porcine gelatine content.

