

# Flu Vaccine and Cancer Treatment

Cancer or its treatment can lower your resistance to infection and make you more likely to catch the flu. The flu vaccination makes it less likely that you will catch the flu and develop complications.

Your immunity may be lower if you have certain types of cancer that affect the bone marrow such as:

- Leukaemia
- Myeloma
- Lymphoma

Some cancer treatments can also lower the immunity and lower your resistance to flu these include:

- Chemotherapy
- Biological therapy
- Radiotherapy
- Long term steroids

We recommend having the flu vaccination prior to starting these treatments. If you have already started chemotherapy the best time is a few days before your next cycle is due. The flu vaccination is a dead virus and is safe to be given during chemotherapy.

You should not have the flu vaccination if:

- You're allergic to egg
- You've had a reaction to a vaccine before

The vaccine doesn't usually cause many side effects but you may have:

- Slight soreness around the site of injection
- A slight fever and aching joints (which don't lead to the flu)

We recommend that carers are also vaccinated but this may not be subsidised in the community.

**If you have a temperature or are unwell on treatment you MUST still seek urgent medical advice as the vaccination will not prevent other infections.**