



Stiúrthóir um Náisiúnta Chosaint Sláinte Poiblí  
FSS An Oifig Náisiúnta um Chosaint Sláinte  
25 - 27 Sráid Ghairdinéir,  
Baile Átha Cliath,  
D01 A4A3,  
Éire

Director of National Health Protection, Public Health  
HSE National Health Protection Office  
25-27 Middle Gardiner Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 A4A3  
Ireland

## RE: ALERT from the HSE regarding current flu season- advice for action now

**To: Principals** (please share with parents, guardians, and staff)

**From: Dr Abigail Collins** (National Clinical Lead, Child Health Public Health, HSE),  
**Dr Augustine Pereira** (Winter Resilience Lead, National Health Protection Office),  
**Dr Éamonn O'Moore** (Director of National Health Protection, HSE)

**Date:** 08<sup>th</sup> December 2025

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Flu rates are surging now, and we expect a challenging flu season over the Christmas/New Year period. **We request now your support in cascading this message for action to parents, guardians and staff.**

### HSE Flu season alert – cascaded via schools:

- Flu is circulating widely in our communities. Children are 5 times more likely to catch the flu than adults and it can cause serious illness.
- That is why HSE provide free nasal spray flu vaccine to all children aged 2 to 17 years, available from their GP or pharmacy.
- It is quick and easy and if you get it now, you'll be protected by Christmas.
- Book an appointment today.
- Use our pharmacy finder to find a pharmacy providing children's flu vaccine [here](#).
- Find out more information about the children's flu vaccine for 2 to 17 year olds [here](#).

Please also find attached a **one-page message** for parents, guardians and staff, - '**Protect yourself and others this flu season**'. This may accompany the headline message above or may be a standalone message.

You can also find tips on dealing with infections on our website. [Winter health advice from the HSE for children.](#)

We thank you for your support in our efforts to control the spread of infection and protecting vulnerable children and adults through your actions.

Sincerely,



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# Protect yourself and others this flu season

## 1. Winter Flu Alert

- **Flu rates are rising. We expect very high levels over the Christmas/New Year period.**
- This increases the risk of illness and complications, especially for vulnerable children and adults.
- Over the past ten years, around 5,000 children have been hospitalised because of complications of flu infection. Of these, around 200 required care in an intensive care unit (ICU). Sadly 40 children died.
- But we have an effective vaccine which can prevent serious complications of infection.

## 2. Children are encouraged to get the flu vaccine. Leaflet in [English](#) | [Irish](#)

- A **nasal spray flu vaccine** is strongly recommended for all children aged **2 to 17 years** and is available from the HSE **free of charge**.
- Vaccination helps protect children from flu and its complications, and reduces transmission in schools and communities.
- Vaccines are available through **HSE school-based vaccination teams, GPs and community pharmacies**.

## 3. Hygiene and stay-at-home guidance

- New HSE webpage provides clear advice on [knowing if your child is well enough to go to school or childcare](#).
- **Key hygiene** measures include:
  - *Washing hands regularly.*
  - *Covering coughs and sneezes.*
  - *Staying at home if you have flu-like symptoms.*