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'Flu injections for Breastfeeding Mothers

The information provided is taken from various reference sources. It is provided as a guideline. No responsibility can be taken by the author or the Breastfeeding Network for the way in which the information is used. Clinical decisions remain the responsibility of medical and breastfeeding practitioners. The data presented here is intended to provide some immediate information but cannot replace input from professionals.

Many women who are breastfeeding, who come into the nationally agreed categories of "at risk" patients, will be offered the 'flu vaccination during the winter months.

There is no evidence that breastfeeding should be seen as a barrier to use of this vaccine.

Influenza vaccine is given directly to babies over 6 months who are at risk.

Influenza vaccine is not orally bio-available and therefore cannot be absorbed from breastmilk.

At risk patients

- Those with chronic respiratory disease – including those with symptoms of asthma requiring regular use of inhalers
- Those with chronic heart disease
- Those with chronic liver disease
- Those with chronic renal disease
- Those with chronic neurological disease
- Those with diabetes mellitus
- Those on immuno- suppressant medication
- Those with HIV
- Carers
- NHS employed staff

Other persons may choose to pay for vaccination via community pharmacists.

Children aged 2, 3 and 4 years are also included in the routine programme. There seems to be no reason why mother and baby cannot receive vaccination at the same time.

Bibliography

- Plotkin SA and Orenstein WA (eds) (2004) Vaccines (Fourth edition). Philadelphia: WB Saunders Company, chapter 8.
- www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/40024883/
- Hale Medications and Mother's Milk 2014 (16th Ed)
- www.immunisation.nhs.uk/FAQs/Can_I_get_a_flu_jab_if_Im_breast-feeding
- LactMed database <http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/cgi-bin/sis/htmlgen?LACTMED>

To speak to a Breastfeeding Supporter call the National Breastfeeding Helpline 0300 100 0212

Calls to 0300 numbers cost no more than calls to UK numbers starting 01 and 02 and will be part of any inclusive minutes that apply to your provider and call package

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