

Further information is available from:

- **[Patient Advice and Liaison Service \(PALS\)](#)**

We act on your behalf when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and where appropriate, relevant organisations to negotiate immediate or prompt solutions. We can also help you get support from other local or national agencies.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Tel: 0800 783 0057 or 01743 261691

Princess Royal Hospital, Tel: 01952 282888

Other Sources of Information

- **[NHS 111](#)**

A fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

Telephone: 111 (free from a landline or mobile)

Website: www.nhs.uk

- **[Patient UK](#)**

Provides leaflets on health and disease translated into 11 other languages as well as links to national support/self-help groups and a directory of UK health websites. Website: www.patient.info

- **[Self Help & Support Groups](#)**

A selection of websites providing access to good quality patient and consumer health information, covering specific age groups and conditions. Also includes Shropshire Community Directory which contains up-to-date information on community groups, clubs, societies, organisations, support groups and self-help groups covering Shropshire and its borders.

Website: www.library.sath.nhs.uk/find/patients/

Information in Other Formats

Different versions of this leaflet are available in large print type.

Website: www.sath.nhs.uk

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Patient Information

Seasonal Influenza (Flu)

Flu is caused by influenza viruses and has the ability to spread quickly

This leaflet will give you information on:

- **Symptoms of Flu**
- **How you may catch Flu**
- **What happens if you have Flu like symptoms**
- **How long will you be infectious for**
- **How to protect yourself**

Symptoms of Flu

The main signs of Flu are:

- High temperature – above 38°C
- Cough
- Joint or muscle pains
- Sore throat, runny nose.

In addition to these, other symptoms may include:

- Headache
- Unusual tiredness
- Feeling sick, being sick or diarrhoea.

How you may catch flu?

The virus is able to spread easily between people.

It can spread by:

- Coughing or sneezing
- Touching or being in close contact with someone with flu and then touching mouth, eyes or nose without washing hands first
- Touching surfaces or objects that have been infected with the flu virus and then touching mouth, eyes or nose without washing hands first.

What happens if you have flu like symptoms or a heavy cold?

- A swab will be taken from your nose and mouth to see if you have the virus
- You will be nursed in a side-room, or placed with other patients who have flu symptoms whilst awaiting the results of the swab.
- If positive for flu, you may be given medicine.
- Healthcare workers may wear special masks and protective clothing when caring for you.

How long will you be infectious for?

People are most likely to pass on the flu soon after they develop symptoms. People are no longer infectious as soon as they start to feel better or five days from the start of symptoms, whichever is sooner.

Children and people with multiple health conditions are no longer infectious as soon as they start to feel better or ten days from the start of symptoms, whichever is sooner.

How to protect yourself

- Washing hands with soap and water and using hand gel helps reduce the spread of the virus
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue
- Throw away dirty tissues once you have used them
- Clean hard surfaces more often using normal cleaning products.
- Have your flu vaccination at the beginning of each flu season if you are:
 - Over 65 years of age
 - In a high risk group (e.g. receiving chemotherapy)
 - A healthcare worker
 - Pregnant
 - Have a long-term condition e.g. diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, etc.
- Please tell your friends and relatives not to visit you if they have flu symptoms

I am pregnant, am I at particular risk?

You may be at greater risk of catching flu and your body more prone to infection. You should talk to your GP or ward staff before visiting anyone with flu. Pregnant women are strongly advised to get the flu jab to protect them against flu.