

# Keeping Well This Winter

Over a third of people in the UK aged over 65 say they dread the cold weather in winter.

This booklet is designed to help you 'Keep Well This Winter' with information on staying warm and safe, flu information (including your FREE flu vaccination), the NHS 111 service and help with fuel costs.



Blaby District



Staying Healthy Partnership



the heart of Leicestershire

[www.blabystayinghealthy.co.uk](http://www.blabystayinghealthy.co.uk)

[www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk)

**NHS**  
East Leicestershire and Rutland  
Clinical Commissioning Group

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## Keeping Well This Winter

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- Cold weather is linked to serious health problems such as flu, heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression
- There were an estimated 43,900 excess deaths in England and Wales last winter, the highest number since 1999, figures show
- 9 in 10 winter deaths are in older people

The chances of these problems are higher if one or more of these apply to you:

- If you are aged over 65
- If you are on a low income (can't afford heating bills)
- If you have a long-term health condition, such as those affecting the heart, lungs or kidneys
- If you are living with a disability

### Top 10 Tips For 'Keeping Well This Winter'

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- 1. Get your free flu vaccine:** Lots of people are entitled to a free flu vaccination. Groups include those aged over 65, those aged under 65 with underlying health conditions/undergoing certain treatments, those living in long stay residential accommodation, pregnant women and carers. 2-4 year olds will also be offered a free flu nasal vaccine in general practice. By protecting small children, the wider population will gain protection.

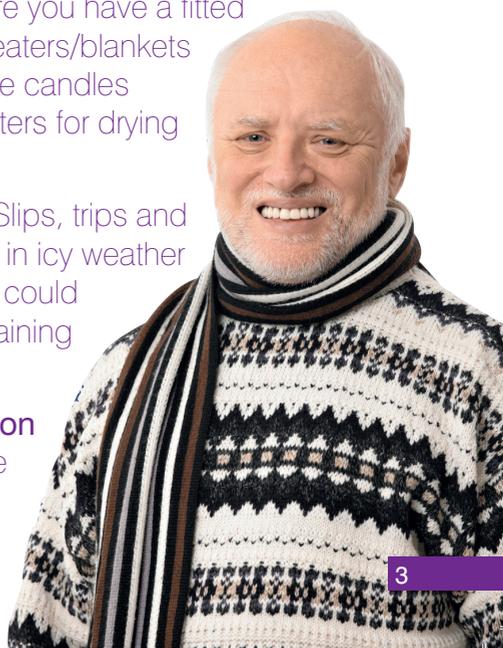


- 2. Wash and clean your hands:** Once flu is spreading apart from vaccination, hygiene is the main method that can help prevent spread. Carry tissues around to catch coughs and sneezes and bin the used tissue as soon as possible. Wash your hands straight away to help kill the germs. Regularly washing and cleaning your hands can help prevent the spread of Flu, Norovirus and Pneumonia.

## Top 10 Tips For 'Keeping Well This Winter' Continued

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- 3. Get your home ready for winter:** Get your heating and cooking appliances checked and flues/chimneys swept ensuring ventilation points are not blocked. If you use heating oil, LPG or wood products as the main heating source; make sure you have sufficient supplies to avoid running out. Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm that is EN50291 compliant, but fitting an alarm should not replace regular maintenance of appliances. Keep your home warm by setting your heating to the right temperature (18-21°C 65-70°F), that way you can keep your home warm and your bills as low as possible.
- 4. Keep yourself warm:** Layer your clothing to stay warm and wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside. Try to keep moving, it is important not to stay still for too long as movement generates heat to help keep you warm. Aim to spread your activities and chores out over the day to help keep you moving.
- 5. Eat well:** Food is a vital source of energy which helps to keep your body warm. Try to make sure that you have regular hot meals and drinks throughout the day. Keep basic food in your cupboards/freezer in case it is too cold to go out shopping.
- 6. Prevent fires in the home:** Make sure you have a fitted and working smoke alarm. Unplug heaters/blankets when they are not in use. Do not leave candles unattended. Do not use portable heaters for drying clothes.
- 7. Learn a few simple first aid steps:** Slips, trips and falls can increase in winter, especially in icy weather therefore knowledge of basic first aid could be very useful. Red Cross First Aid Training contact on back page.
- 8. Look after yourself but also check on older neighbours or relatives:** Make sure they are safe, warm and well.



## Top 10 Tips For 'Keeping Well This Winter' Continued

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- 9. Keep yourself safe:** Avoid becoming a victim of crime during the winter. Fit good window and door locks and always use them. Store your car keys out of sight and never leave your car running unattended. Don't let strangers into your home and always check the ID of anyone calling at your door, no matter how official they may look. You can report anyone suspicious to the Police on 101.
- 10. Check the weather forecast:** Plan ahead for severe weather to ensure you have enough food and medicines. Avoid driving in severe weather and make regular checks of your vehicle, including tyres.

### About The Flu

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#### What is the flu?

Flu is a highly infectious illness that spreads rapidly through the coughs and sneezes of people who are carrying the virus.

#### What are the main symptoms?

Flu symptoms can hit quite suddenly and severely. They usually include fever, chills, headaches, aching muscles and extreme tiredness. You can often get a cough and sore throat. Flu is caused by a virus (not bacteria), therefore antibiotics will not treat it.

#### Who can get the flu?

Anyone can catch flu, but it can be more serious for certain groups of people, such as:

- People aged over 65
- People who have a serious medical condition
- Pregnant women



## About The Flu Continued

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If you are in one of these groups, you are more vulnerable to the effects of flu (even if you're fit and healthy) and could develop flu complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia (i.e. more serious illnesses which could result in hospitalisation). Flu viruses change each year, so the vaccine changes each year. You need to have the vaccine each year to protect you against the latest strains of flu virus.

### Will there be any side effects from having the flu vaccine?

The injected flu vaccine given to adults contains inactivated flu viruses. You cannot get the flu from having the vaccination. Your arm may feel a bit sore where you were injected, and some people get a slight temperature and aching muscles for a couple of days afterwards, other reactions are very rare.

#### Pneumonia

Pneumonia disease increases in the Winter and affects the very young, elderly and those with health problems.

If you are aged over 65 you are entitled to one dose of the free pneumococcal vaccine to protect you from pneumonia. It is not necessary to have this vaccine yearly. If you are aged under 65 and in a 'risk' group, you will also be entitled to the vaccination. Ask your surgery GP/practice nurse for more details.

## Get Your Free Flu Vaccine

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Contact your GP surgery to get your free vaccine if you are in one of the following groups:

- Aged over 65
- Aged under 65 (including children and babies over six months of age) who has one of the following medical conditions:



## Get Your Free Flu Vaccine Continued

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- ▷ Heart problems
- ▷ Chronic respiratory disease or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis or emphysema
- ▷ Chronic heart disease such as heart failure
- ▷ Chronic respiratory disease including severe asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or bronchitis.
- ▷ Chronic kidney disease
- ▷ Chronic liver disease
- ▷ Household contacts of anyone immunocompromised (i.e. with any of the conditions above)
- All pregnant women, at any stage of pregnancy
- All two, three, and four-year old children. Children who are older and in years 1-6 will receive a flu vaccine at school (this applies to Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland), surrounding areas will be vaccinating school years 1-3. Most children will receive a spray up the nose instead of an injection
- Those living in a residential or nursing home
- People in receipt of carers allowance, or those who are a main carer of an older or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.
- Frontline health and social care workers

Get your vaccine as early as possible this winter to get the best protection but it will be available at any time so don't worry if you think you have missed out.

If you are aged over 18 and in one of the groups listed above, you may be able to have your vaccination free of charge from your pharmacy. Please note, not all pharmacies might be signed up to deliver this service.

**For more information please speak to your GP, practice nurse or visit your local pharmacist.**

## NHS 111

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NHS 111 is a service that has been introduced to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services in England. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help when you need it.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.

### Call 111 if:

- You need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- You think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- You don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- You need health information or reassurance about what to do next

For less urgent health needs, contact your GP or local pharmacist in the usual way. If a health professional has given you a specific phone number to call when you are concerned about your condition, continue to use that number.

For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999.



## Stay Well

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We understand it's not always easy to know how to get help when you're not well. There are a lot of different ways to access healthcare, which can be confusing, especially when you're feeling under the weather. To help, we've put together a step by step guide to show you how to manage your health and get the most out of your local NHS services in Blaby, Oadby and Wigston.

- 1. Keep warm, look after your health - and seek help early before your illness gets worse:** Heat your home to at least 18 degrees C (or 65F) if you can. Sometimes illness can get worse quickly when it's cold and you may already be under the weather with a cold or cough. Seek help as soon as you feel unwell – if you don't your condition could become worse and turn into an emergency. Stock up on food and medicines so you don't have to go out when it's icy.
- 2. Can you treat your illness yourself? If not, can your pharmacist help?** Coughs and cold and other minor illnesses will generally get better on their own. Keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet so that if you do feel ill, you can try treating yourself before you make an appointment to see a doctor. Your pharmacist can also advise you on a range of minor illnesses and ailments, and it's quicker and easier to pop into your local pharmacist than it is making an appointment to see a doctor. If you need a pharmacy with longer opening hours in Blaby visit: [www.nhs.uk/livewell/pharmacy](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/pharmacy) or download the



## Stay Well Continued

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'NHS Now' app from Google Play or iTunes.

- 3. Make an appointment with your GP:** If you can't treat your illness yourself, then your GP can help. Get to know your local practice, and find out the best way to book an appointment. Most practices in Blaby offer online booking which can be quicker. Practice nurses are also able to treat and advise on many conditions and will often be able to see you more quickly.
- 4. Not sure what to do? Think you need to see someone urgently but it's not life threatening? Call NHS 111:** If you need immediate medical help for physical or mental issues, but it's not a life threatening emergency, NHS 111 can help. You'll speak to a highly trained call adviser who will assess your condition and, if necessary transfer you to a clinician for a second opinion. They can give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you to the local service that can help you best.
- 5. Visit your local Urgent Care Centre:** If you have an urgent, but non-life threatening medical need, please contact your GP. When your GP is closed you can visit the urgent care centre based at the Oadby Urgent Care Centre. Open 8am until 9pm weekdays and 8am until 8pm weekends and bank holidays, seeing and treating patients of all ages with a range of urgent care needs, including cuts and wounds needing stitches, infections, vomiting and diarrhoea, and minor burns, as well as strains and dislocations. For 24 hour urgent care needs, 365 days a year then you can also visit the Urgent Care Centre Leicester at the Leicester Royal Infirmary.



## Stay Well Continued

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1. Keep warm, look after your health
2. Can you treat your illness yourself? If not, can your pharmacist help?
3. Make an appointment with your GP
4. Not sure what to do? Think you need to see someone urgently but it's not life threatening? Call NHS 111
5. Visit your local Urgent Care Centre for non-life threatening medical treatment and advice

Oadby Urgent Care Centre  
18 The Parade  
Oadby  
LE2 5BJ

Leicester Urgent Care Centre  
Leicester Royal Infirmary  
Infirmary Square  
Leicester  
LE1 5WW

If it's a real medical emergency, such as choking, severe blood loss, or the patient is unconscious, please call 999.

For more information on staying well, please visit the website at [www.eastleicestershireandrutlandccg.nhs.uk](http://www.eastleicestershireandrutlandccg.nhs.uk)

## Heating Your Home

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There is a possibility that the lack of affordable heating, particularly in homes that are more difficult to heat, could be contributing to excess winter deaths. Please contact the council in the first instance to see how we can help, it may be that we ask you to speak to the Energy Savings Trust. Emergency heating grants are also available for repairing or replacing broken heating systems for vulnerable people in Blaby District. The funding is limited and is offered on a first come, first served basis.

## Heating Your Home Continued

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### To qualify you:

- Must live in the Blaby District and
- Be an owner occupier or Private Tenant and
- Be age 60+ or
- In receipt of a disability benefit or
- Have a child under 5 and
- Be in receipt of a means tested benefit or
- On a low income



For full details or to talk to a grant officer please call **0116 272 7683** or email [housing.adaptations@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:housing.adaptations@blaby.gov.uk)

Grants are limited and are on a first come first served basis.

Contact the Energy Saving Trust on **0300 123 1234**  
email [energyadvice@est.org.uk](mailto:energyadvice@est.org.uk)  
or visit their website at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

### Calling Times

Mon-Fri: **9.00am-10.00pm**

Sat: **10.00am-2.00pm**

### Warm homes, healthy homes

Partnership between Papworth Trust and National Energy Action funded by Leicestershire County Council. Helping you to reduce your energy bills and stay warm and healthy in your home. We can offer you a healthy home check.

Call us now on **0300 333 6544**

## Other Useful Contacts

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Police (Non-emergency number) – 101  
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue – home safety check 0116 287 2241  
Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care – 0116 222 9555  
Age UK Leicestershire & Rutland (Advice and Information) – 0116 299 2278  
Blaby District Council Community Services Team – 0116 272 7725  
Blaby District Council Environmental Protection Team – 0116 272 7555  
Blaby District Council Housing Options Team – 0116 272 7770  
Community Action Partnership – 0116 278 4230  
Citizens' Advice Bureau – 0300 330 1025  
Alzheimer's Society – 0116 231 1111  
Leicestershire Support for Carers – 0845 689 9510  
Lifeline Personal Alarm Service – 0300 123 0701  
Agewise – 0741 513 8766  
Red Cross First Aid Training – 0845 163 3707  
National Debt Helpline – 0808 808 4000  
Royal Voluntary Service Leicestershire – 0116 266 7706  
iCare community meals – 01858 469902

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This document can be made available on request, in other languages and formats (large print, Braille or on audio tape) by contacting:

Health and Leisure Services, The Pavilion  
Sportsfield Lane, Huncote, Leicester, LE9 3BN  
Tel: 0116 272 7703 Email: [leisure@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@blaby.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.blabystayinghealthy.co.uk](http://www.blabystayinghealthy.co.uk)

This booklet has been produced by Blaby District Council to provide information about services in the local area. Whilst every effort has been made to verify entries, Blaby District Council cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the data.

Blaby District



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