

**We are vaccination ready for this Autumn & Winter**

## Your Doctors

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### **OPENING TIMES**

Monday to Friday. Please check individual practices for times as they vary for each site.

### **EXTENDED ACCESS**

Evening and weekend clinics available for pre-booking. Please call your practice to be advised of availability.

Please call **111** for medical advice & direction or **999** for life-threatening emergencies when we are closed.



HM Government

**NHS**

**BOOST YOUR  
IMMUNITY**

**WITH THE FLU VACCINE  
+ COVID-19 BOOSTER**

**If you're eligible, the NHS will invite you when it's your turn.**

**NHS**

# Flu & Covid Booster Vaccinations – October

From the beginning of October, our RCMG practices will be offering **free seasonal flu and Covid booster vaccinations**.

Each jab given at our practices supports both us and the NHS – so if you're registered with us and receive an invitation, please book with us.

## Who Can Get Vaccinated

- **Covid booster** → Age 75+ or in eligible group (see p.2-3)
- **Flu jab** → Age 65+ or in eligible group (see p.2-3)

## How It Works

- Both vaccines are given at the same time – one in each arm
- If you only want one, you can choose just flu or just Covid when booking
- Moderna or Pfizer will be used for the Covid booster (type will be confirmed on the day)

## How to Book

**Invitations will be sent via text from September 1st onwards (in batches)**

**No Mobile? We'll email you or send a letter if needed.**

**Booking line:**

**Holsworthy & Hatherleigh**

**01409 255224**

# All you ever wanted to know about Autumn vaccinations!

## Why Bother with Autumn/Winter Vaccinations?

We get it—vaccination fatigue is real. But skipping your flu and COVID-19 jabs this season could leave you vulnerable when it matters most. Here's why it's still worth it:

- **Double Trouble:** Catching flu *and* COVID-19 at the same time? Research shows it significantly increases your risk of serious illness.
- **Protect Yourself & Others:** Vaccines help shield you—and those around you—from the worst of both viruses.
- **Avoid the Misery:** Flu and COVID-19 aren't just inconvenient. They're exhausting, painful, and can knock you out for weeks. Vaccination is your best defence against those nasty symptoms.

## Why October?

Most eligible adults will be offered a flu vaccine from **early October**. Although this is slightly later than in previous years, it follows the latest scientific evidence. Research shows that protection from the flu vaccine **can wear off over time in adults**. By offering the vaccine closer to when flu usually starts circulating, people will have **stronger protection at the time they need it most**.

## Flu Vaccine



The flu vaccine helps protect against seasonal flu. It is offered free on the NHS to people most at risk of getting seriously ill from flu.

■ Recommended for eligible groups from September & October 2025.

### From 1 September 2025

- Pregnant women
- Children aged 2–3 years (on 31 Aug 2025)
- Primary school children (Reception–Year 6)
- Secondary school children (Year 7–Year 11)
- Children in clinical risk groups (6 months–under 18)

- Most children will be offered the **nasal spray**
- Some may need the **injection** (egg allergy, weak immune system, past reactions)

Reception to year 11—Most children will get their flu jab at school. You will get an invitation from your child's school.

Missed appointments, or home schooled?

Contact a local flu vaccine community clinic.

### From October 2025

- Adults aged 65 and over
- Adults 18–64 in clinical risk groups
- Residents in long-stay care homes
- Carers (Carer's Allowance or main carer for elderly/disabled)
- Close contacts of immunocompromised individuals

We want to keep you well this winter



## How to Get the Flu Vaccine

If eligible, the NHS will contact you in autumn or early winter.

You can get your free flu vaccine from:

- Your GP surgery
- A pharmacy (ages 18+)
- Maternity services
- Care homes
- Employers (frontline health/social care staff)

Stay Protected. Get Vaccinated.

## AUTUMN/WINTER COVID BOOSTER—am I in an eligible group for a Covid booster?

The following groups of people are eligible for a Covid booster:

- anyone aged 75 (including those who'll be 75 by 31 March 2026)
- persons living in a care home for older people and their staff
- persons aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed, as defined in tables 3 and 4 of the COVID-19 chapter of the [Green Book](#)

As we have not been commissioned to provide Covid Vaccinations to young people who are aged 5 to 17, other local clinics, or schools should be offering these. We will post clinics on our website and Facebook page when we are notified. The **National Booking Service (NBS)** will be available for the public to book appointments at other venues, from **1st September** for vaccinations from 1st October 2025

- the last available appointment date on NBS will be 31 January 2026 for COVID-19; NBS will remain open for flu only appointments until 31 March 2026

### GAPS BETWEEN VACCINATIONS

For all Covid vaccinations the gaps between boosters should be:

- Those aged 12 and above, who are immunocompromised, must have a gap of at least 3 months since their last dose, ideally 6 months.
- Those aged 65 and above must have a gap of at least 3 months since their last booster/dose, ideally 6 months.

### What is the COVID-19 vaccine for?

- help reduce your risk of getting severe symptoms
  - help you recover more quickly if you catch COVID-19
  - help reduce your risk of having to go to hospital or dying from COVID-19
- protect against different types of COVID-19 virus



**Care Home and Housebound Vaccinations**—Our Home Visiting Team will be carrying out the vaccinations to people living in a Care Home for older people, or to housebound people who fall into the one of the eligible groups.

The team will be contacting you to arrange their visit.

The MMR vaccine gives **long-term protection against measles, mumps and rubella**. These 3 infections spread easily between people and can lead to **serious problems including meningitis, blindness and hearing loss**.

Children are given a dose at : **MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine - NHS**

- 1 year old
- 3 years and 4 months old.

Babies between **6 and 12 months** can have an extra dose of the MMR vaccine before this if they need it to protect them if:

- They are travelling abroad to an area with lots of measles
- They've been close to someone with measles
- There is an outbreak of measles.

The MMR vaccine can be given at **any age**. Speak to a GP if you did not have the vaccine as a child.



# RSV Vaccine

## Have your RSV vaccine to help protect you

RSV can cause pneumonia which can be serious



The RSV vaccine helps protect against **respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)** – a common virus that can make **babies** and **older adults** seriously ill.

- Recommended for:
- Pregnant women (around **28 weeks**)
- Adults aged **75–79**

### What is RSV?

RSV is a very common cause of coughs and colds. Most people get it several times in their life.

But in some people it can cause:

- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Bronchiolitis (chest infection in babies)

### How to Get the RSV Vaccine

- Pregnant? Offered at your **28-week antenatal appointment**
- Aged 75–79? Contact your **GP surgery** to book
- Your GP may also contact you by letter, text, phone, or email.



Protect Yourself. Protect Others. Get Vaccinated.

## Off to University?

UK Health Security Agency

### Getting back together

Before leaving for university

- ✓ 2 doses of MMR vaccine
- ✓ 1 dose of MenACWY
- ✓ know the signs and symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia
- ✓ know how to seek medical advice

Vaccines save lives. Visit NHS.UK to find out [www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them)

immunisation  
Helping to protect everyone at every age

### MenACWY Vaccine

The MenACWY vaccine helps protect against **life-threatening illnesses** such as:

- Meningitis
- Sepsis (blood poisoning)
- Septicaemia

It is mainly offered to **teenagers in school**, but can still be given **up to age 25** if missed.

#### Why it's important

These illnesses can cause:

- Amputations
- Hearing loss
- Brain damage
- Death

- Anyone can get meningitis, but it is most common in **babies, children, teenagers and young adults**.

#### Heading to Uni or College?

Before you go (whether for the first time or returning):

- Make sure you're **up-to-date with your jabs**
- Check your vaccination record in the **NHS App**
- If unsure, **contact your GP** – they can check and book you in if you've missed any

Protect Yourself. Protect Your Friends. Get Vaccinated.

Check our  
website!

Vaccination  
confusion?

**COVID & FLU VACCINATION - Ruby Country Medical Group**

## September Health Campaigns

**"Every breath matters.** Every story deserves to be heard. Every action brings us closer to change". - **Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis Charity**

This September, we're shining a spotlight on **Pulmonary Fibrosis (PF)**, a devastating lung disease affecting over **70,000 people in the UK**. A progressive and serious lung disease with a poor prognosis. Despite extensive investigation, the cause of IPF (Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis) remains unknown.

# Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month SEPT 2025

### Pulmonary Fibrosis Signs vs. Symptoms

#### Signs



A common sign is crackles heard when listening to the lungs with a stethoscope

These crackles often sound like Velcro being pulled apart

#### Symptoms

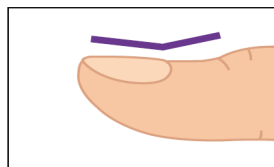


- Shortness of breath (breathlessness)
- Dry cough
- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Clubbing of fingers and toes – swollen, rounded tips of fingers and toes

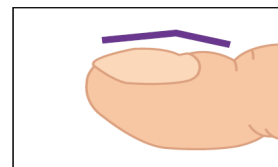
For more information please visit

<https://www.actionpf.org>

[Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis - NHS](#)



Normal angle of nail bed



Clubbing: rounded finger tips

People affected by pulmonary fibrosis say they feel like they're living with an 'invisible killer'. You can hear the 'velcro' rasping breath of someone with deeply scarred lungs.

If you are affected or know someone who has been diagnosed with IPF, you can follow the 'Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis' Facebook page.

"Together we are stronger"

<https://www.facebook.com/actionpulmonaryfibrosis>



Around **1 in 3** people in the UK have **never heard of PF**



## Practice News



**Our Staff Updates**

We bid farewell to **Elizabeth Tilzey** (Prescription Clerk) and **Anneka Williams** (Nurse Practitioner) at the end of August, and wish them all the best for their future plans.

**Next page—Important changes to the Ruby Country Medical Group .....**

## Stratton Medical Centre will be leaving the Ruby Country Medical Group



### Important Update for Our Patients

We want to let you know about a change to the way Ruby Country Medical Group (RCMG) is organised.

From 1 October 2025, Stratton Medical Centre will no longer be part of RCMG and will return to being an independent GP practice. This decision has been made jointly by the partners at RCMG and Stratton following careful and thoughtful consideration.

What this means for patients at Holsworthy and Hatherleigh:

- There will be no change to the services we provide. You will continue to see the same doctors, nurses, and staff at Holsworthy and Hatherleigh as you do now.
- Your care will not be disrupted. Your medical records remain safely with your registered practice.
- Improved local focus. Staff will no longer have to travel between sites, meaning our teams can focus fully on their own practice and patients.
- Closer community working. Holsworthy and Hatherleigh will be able to direct their energy into improving care and access for the local population.

We want to reassure you that this change is about strengthening services, not reducing them. By giving each practice greater independence and local focus, we are confident that this will mean better continuity of care, improved access and more time for our staff to dedicate to you - our patients. from:

Thank you for your continued support as we make this transition.

The Partners, Ruby Country Medical Group



SEPTEMBER IS  
CHILDHOOD  
CANCER  
AWARENESS  
MONTH

SUPPORT • ADVOCATE • CURE

This year the theme for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month is 'Diagnosis'



1,900 children (up to the age of 15) in the UK are diagnosed with cancer each year.



88 different cancer types have been diagnosed in children.



84% of children now survive their cancer for 5 years or more.



2 in 3 survivors will have a long-term side effect related to their cancer treatment, which may affect them throughout their life.

<https://www.childrenwithcancer.org.uk/>