

It's 'flu-jab time!

A reminder that this is the time of year when we should be thinking about making an appointment with the GP for the annual 'flu injection. It's also a good idea to make sure family members are vaccinated as a precaution to protect you. While you are at the doctor's, you should take the opportunity to check that your **pneumonia** protection is up to date. For CLL patients, it is recommended that this is renewed every five years. If you need a booster, you should have **two** injections spaced about two months apart. The first is known as Prevarin 13 and the second PPSV23. Your GP may not be aware that, as a CLL patient, you need these two injections for you to get full cover, and if there is any doubt, please ask your CLL consultant to contact your GP.

Please remember that you should NOT have any live vaccines, such as for shingles or yellow fever.

What is shingles?

CLL patients are particularly vulnerable to shingles because of our weakened immune system.

Shingles is a virus condition involving inflammation of sensory nerves that can result in severe pain. It causes localized pain, numbness, and itching, followed by the appearance of clustered blisters in a strip pattern on one side of the body. Sometimes the pain can persist for weeks, months, or years after the rash heals (known as postherpetic neuralgia).

The pain of shingles may develop even when there is no rash. The patient may notice several days to a week of burning pain and sensitive skin before the rash appears. In this situation it may be difficult to determine the cause of the often severe pain.

Other symptoms that may occur before a shingles rash include fever, chills, upset stomach and headache.

More information here:

https://www.medicinenet.com/shingles_picture_slideshow/article.htm?ecd=mnl_spc_083019

It's good to be aware and take prompt action if you suspect shingles because EARLY treatment with strong antivirals is ALWAYS necessary.

Until Next Time

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CLLSA is the only UK charity dedicated to providing education, support, and advocacy to help empower people living with CLL.