COVID-19 Vaccine & Pregnancy

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all people aged 12 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future.

What are the benefits of vaccinating against COVID-19?

If you are pregnant, you are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- Compared to non-pregnant women with COVID-19 who are the same age, pregnant COVID-19 patients are at higher risk of:
  - Developing respiratory complications
  - Being admitted into the intensive care unit (ICU)
  - Requiring life support measures such as a ventilator or a heart-lung machine (ECMO)
  - Having a preterm birth
  - Dying of COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines provide protection from COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and death.

- Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines provide strong protection against COVID-19, especially severe illness and death.
  - The CDC and FDA have stated that COVID-19 vaccines continue to provide protection against currently circulating variants (including Delta) in the U.S. and that virtually all COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths are among those who are unvaccinated.
- Preliminary findings show that the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccine are similar to that observed in non-pregnant individuals. Additionally, recent research out of Israel has indicated that Pfizer’s vaccine does show strong effectiveness at preventing COVID-19 infections in pregnant women.
- Research has further suggested that during pregnancy, mothers may provide some level of protection against COVID-19 to neonates. Additionally, breastfeeding mothers who have received a COVID-19 vaccine can produce antibodies in breast milk which can help provide protection for infants against the disease.


- mRNA (Pfizer, Moderna) and non-replicating viral vector vaccines (Johnson & Johnson) are not live virus vaccines.
- The COVID-19 vaccines do NOT contain ingredients known to be harmful to pregnant women or the fetus.
- Many vaccines are routinely given in pregnancy and are safe (e.g., tetanus, diphtheria, and flu).
• These vaccines do not alter human DNA. Therefore, mRNA and non-replicating viral vector vaccines cannot cause any genetic changes to an unborn baby.

**What are the risks of vaccinating against COVID-19?**

**COVID-19 vaccines have not yet been tested in pregnant women.**

- The Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines were tested in 30,000 to 44,000 people in clinical trials, and there were no serious side effects. However, these vaccines were not specifically tested in pregnant women. Some women did become pregnant during the study. No adverse events in vaccinated pregnant women have been reported from clinical trials.
- Over 147,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the U.S. No safety concerns have been identified via the vaccine safety monitoring systems.
  - FDA and CDC are continuing to monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant women.
- **Early findings** from vaccine safety monitoring systems did not show any safety signals among pregnant women receiving mRNA COVID-19 vaccines.
  - There was no increased risk of miscarriage, preterm birth, or neonatal death among pregnant women who received a COVID-19 vaccine.
- As of February 18, 2021, Pfizer has begun to enroll pregnant women in a clinical trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of their COVID-19 vaccine in this group and whether infants receive any protective antibodies from their mothers.
- Additionally, developmental and reproductive toxicity (DART) studies, which use animal models, were conducted to ensure the safety of vaccines prior to use in pregnant women. **Results** from DART studies for the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines have shown no safety concerns in pregnancy.

**People getting the vaccine could experience some side effects.**

- Some people have no side effects. Yet many who have received a COVID-19 vaccine have reported some side effects following vaccination.
- Common side effects reported include injection site pain, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, and fever.
  - Pregnant women who experience a fever should take Tylenol (acetaminophen).
- Side effects are more common after the second dose for the two-dose series (Pfizer, Moderna).
- Side effects are a sign your immune system is working.
- Serious adverse events are extremely rare following COVID-19 vaccination.
How to make an informed decision

1. Make sure you understand as much as you can about COVID-19 and about the vaccines.

2. Have a conversation with a trusted healthcare professional, such as your doctor or midwife, about getting vaccinated.


You are at increased risk if:

- You have contact with people outside your household who don’t wear masks or remain unvaccinated
- You are 35 years or older
- You are overweight
- You have other medical problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease
- You are a smoker
- Your community has a high rate of COVID-19 infection
- Your community has a low rate of COVID-19 vaccination
- You are a healthcare worker

You are at lower risk if:

- You are always able to wear a mask
- You and those you live with can socially distance from others for your whole pregnancy
- Your community does not have high or increasing rates of COVID-19 being reported
- Your community has a high rate of COVID-19 vaccination

What do the experts recommend?

The CDC has stated, “COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all people age 12 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future. Pregnant and recently pregnant people are more likely to get severely ill with COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people. Getting COVID-19 vaccine can protect you from severe illness from COVID-19.”

The American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG) and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, the two leading organizations representing specialists in obstetric care, recommend that all pregnant individuals be vaccinated against COVID-19. The organizations’ recommendations in support of vaccination during pregnancy reflect evidence demonstrating the safe use of the COVID-19 vaccines during pregnancy from tens of thousands of reporting individuals over the last several months, as well as the current low vaccination rates and concerning increase in cases.

The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) has stated, “COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for women who are contemplating pregnancy or who are pregnant in order to minimize risks to themselves and their pregnancy”.

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