

COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding: FAQs

February 24, 2022



Should individuals who are pregnant, breastfeeding, and/or wanting to become pregnant get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Pregnant individuals and those up to six weeks after delivery who have COVID-19 are at **higher risk of severe disease** and **pregnancy complications** regardless of symptom severity, including:

- Hospitalization, ICU admission, and mechanical ventilation
- Death
- Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (including preeclampsia and eclampsia)
- Caesarean section
- Preterm birth and subsequent neonatal complications of prematurity
- Stillbirth (risk continues for remainder of the pregnancy) [7,9]

4.2x

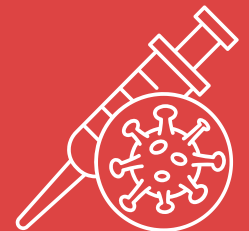
greater risk of **hospitalization** among pregnant individuals than non-pregnant individuals [7]

22x

higher **maternal mortality** in pregnancies affected with COVID-19 [9]

What are the protective benefits of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy and breastfeeding?

- Along with masking and physical distancing, getting vaccinated is the most effective way to **reduce the risk of COVID-19 and its complications** [3,8].
- The protective **antibodies from vaccination in pregnancy pass to your baby**, which may keep them safe after birth [5].
- These antibodies are also likely passed in breastmilk with a continued protective benefit to your baby [5,8].



Should I get my COVID-19 vaccine third dose/booster if I am pregnant, breastfeeding, or trying to become pregnant?

- Yes. Pregnant and breastfeeding individuals mount similar immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines as the general population, including similar waning immunity over time. Booster doses are therefore not only recommended but prioritized, given the elevated risk of severe disease with COVID-19 infection in pregnancy and within six weeks after delivery [2,6,8].
- Data so far suggests that **boosters are just as safe, effective, and potentially beneficial to your newborn** as the primary series in pregnancy, breastfeeding, and those wanting to become pregnant - regardless of whether you were pregnant or breastfeeding at the time of your previous doses [2].

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Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe in pregnancy, breastfeeding, or trying to become pregnant?

Yes. Data from many countries, including in over **185,000 individuals vaccinated** just prior to or in pregnancy in the US, support the safety of the vaccine [1].

- There have been **NO adverse maternal, fetal, or neonatal outcomes** - including miscarriage, preterm birth, low birth weight, hypertensive disorders in pregnancy, maternal mortality, stillbirth, or congenital abnormalities - associated with the vaccine in pregnancy. This is true in ANY stage of pregnancy [2,3].
- There have been **NO adverse neonatal outcomes** associated with the vaccine in breastfeeding [2,3,6,8].
- The vaccine itself **does not pass to the fetus or newborn** during pregnancy or breastfeeding [3].
- There have been **NO adverse fertility effects in men or women** associated with this vaccine [2,3,8].

The safest and best time to get vaccinated is as soon as possible.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine as effective in pregnancy and breastfeeding?

Yes. Similar to the general population, the COVID-19 vaccines are very effective in protecting against COVID-19 and severe disease from COVID-19 among pregnant and breastfeeding individuals.

When directly compared to unvaccinated pregnant individuals, multiple studies demonstrate that the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are just as effective in pregnancy as in the general population [4,9].

Additional Resources

[The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada COVID-19 Vaccine in Pregnancy | American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists](#) | [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine in Pregnancy Registry](#)

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). COVID-19 Vaccine Pregnancy Registry.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding.
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4. Dagan N., et al. (2021). Effectiveness of the BNT162b2 mRNA COVID-19 vaccine in pregnancy. *Nature Med.* 1693-1695.
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6. Poliquin, V., et al. (2021). The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) Statement on COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnancy.
7. Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health. (2021). PCMCH Patient Information Sheet on COVID-19 Vaccines.
8. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2021). COVID-19 Vaccination Considerations for Obstetric-Gynecologic Care.
9. Villar J., et al. (2021). Maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality among pregnant women with and without COVID-19 infection. *The INTERCOVID Multinational Cohort Study*. *JAMA Pediatr.* E1-E10.