

Facts for Pregnant and Lactating People

What should I know about my risk of COVID-19 if I'm pregnant or recently became pregnant

Because you are pregnant, there is no increased risk that you will contract COVID-19. However, compared to a person who is not pregnant, a pregnant person who contracts COVID-19 is more likely to become severely ill from it.

An infection with COVID-19 during pregnancy can harm your unborn child and raise your risk of experiencing pregnancy problems. For instance, COVID-19 in a pregnant person (before 37 weeks) can result in a premature birth or a stillborn child.

If I'm pregnant or lactating, should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can protect you from severe illness due to COVID-19. Vaccination can also help you build antibodies that might protect your baby. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recommends people who are pregnant, nursing, or trying to get pregnant continue to get their yearly updated COVID-19 shot ([Source](#)).

What are the side effects of the COVID-19 shot?

Common side effects can occur after receiving any of the available COVID-19 shots.

You could experience the following side effects for about 24-48 hours. Side effects are normal signs that the COVID-19 shot is working and your body is building protection.

- **Pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site**
- **Tiredness**
- **Headache**
- **Muscle pain**
- **Chills**
- **Fever and/or**
- **Nausea**

COVID-19 vaccines and fertility:

There is no proof that COVID-19 immunization causes a loss of fertility, according to health care professionals who serve persons of reproductive age, including adolescents.



COVID-19 vaccines and menstrual cycle:

People have reported menstrual cycle changes after COVID-19 vaccines, such as changes in flow length or intensity. When changes do occur, menstruation usually returns to normal within one cycle, and there are no long-term changes to menstruation.

COVID-19 vaccines and lactation:

When you get vaccinated, your body produces antibodies that fight viruses. These antibodies help protect you and your baby from colds, allergies, and other illnesses like the virus that causes COVID-19. A recent study supports that the antibodies pass through breast milk after vaccination, possibly allowing a lactating person's vaccine to protect baby from COVID-19.

Getting vaccinated and continuing to give breast milk to your baby is the most effective way to protect your child against COVID-19 if ever exposed. If you still have additional questions, reach out to your healthcare provider, and discuss these and the benefits of vaccination.

For help, call this FREE 24-hour crisis hotline:

(1-866-364-6667)

Do you still have questions about COVID-19?

If you would like to speak to someone about COVID-19 vaccination, you can contact MotherToBaby, whose experts can answer questions in English or Spanish by phone or chat. The free and confidential service is available Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. (local time).

To reach MotherToBaby call:

1-866-626-6847

or [Chat live](#) or send an email [MothersToBaby](#)



Credible Resources:

Your guide to women's health direct from the experts
(American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists):
<https://www.acog.org/womens-health>

Mother To Baby:
<https://mothertobaby.org/>

EverThrive Illinois:
<https://understand.everthriveil.org/>

IDPH Immunizations: bit.ly/42ALAN6



Disclaimer: We frequently review and update this information to reflect the most current data available and provided by subject matter experts on the topic of immunization. Last updated October 2025.