

Facts for Pregnant and Lactating People

If I'm pregnant, am I at higher risk for getting COVID-19?

Pregnant people who have COVID-19 with symptoms have a 70% higher risk of dying, yet only 31% of pregnant people have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

So, if you are pregnant, you are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 than people who are not pregnant. Pregnancy also causes changes in the body that could make it easier to get very sick from respiratory viruses like the one that causes COVID-19.

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.

You can receive any of the three approved COVID-19 vaccines at any point during pregnancy, while lactating, and at the same time as other vaccines. It is recommended that pregnant and lactating people receive a booster dose six months after their last dose.

Once vaccinated, consider joining the v-safe pregnancy registry. The [v-safe pregnancy registry](#) collects data on the health of pregnant people who have received the COVID-19 shot so that the shot's safety and effectiveness may be monitored. If you have concerns, talk to your health care provider about the risks and benefits of vaccination.

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

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 your body is building protection against the COVID-19 virus.

- 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 that 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 mom's vaccine to protect her 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.

How can I manage anxiety or sadness during the pandemic?

During this stressful and changing time, you might have more anxiety about your health and the health of your family. Reach out to family and friends for support while taking precautions to reduce your risk of infection with the COVID-19 virus.

Any person can develop depression during or after pregnancy, and it is nothing to be ashamed of. Talk with your health care provider or a knowledgeable mental health professional if you have any questions about depression or its treatment.

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

1-866-364-MOMS

(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 [MotherToBaby](#)



Credible Resources:

- How to Enroll or Access Your v-safe Account (CDC):
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/register-for-v-safe.html>
- 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/>



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