

Reproductive Health and COVID-19 Vaccines: Frequently Asked Questions

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other medical experts strongly recommend people who are pregnant, breastfeeding or wanting to become pregnant get vaccinated against COVID-19.



How do the COVID-19 vaccines work?

The vaccines teach your body how to make a protein like the one that is part of the virus that causes COVID-19. This causes your immune system to make antibodies and other protections against the virus so if you are exposed to COVID-19 after getting vaccinated, your body will be able to recognize and fight the virus. The vaccines do not contain the virus that causes COVID-19, so they cannot give you COVID-19. They also cannot change your DNA.



What are the risks of getting COVID-19 for people who are pregnant?

People who are pregnant or were recently pregnant are more likely to become very sick from COVID-19 than people who are not pregnant or were not recently pregnant. This may include hospitalization, intensive care, needing a ventilator or death. People who are pregnant and have COVID-19 are also at increased risk for preterm birth (delivering the baby before 37 weeks) and possibly other negative pregnancy outcomes.



Should people who are pregnant or breastfeeding get vaccinated?

The CDC, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) strongly recommend that all people who are pregnant or breastfeeding (sometimes referred to as chestfeeding) get vaccinated against COVID-19. This recommendation is based on evidence we have now about vaccine safety for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding and the risks of getting COVID-19, including the more contagious and dangerous delta variant. Early data from safety monitoring systems of people who are pregnant and got the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines did not find any safety concerns for them or their babies.

All three COVID-19 vaccines can be given to people who are pregnant or breastfeeding. However, people, especially women younger than 50, should know about the rare but increased risk for thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS), a type of blood clot with low platelet count, after getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. This risk has not been seen with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

People who are pregnant or breastfeeding can get vaccinated in any setting, such as a City-run vaccination site, a pharmacy or their health care provider's office. There is no recommendation for people to take a pregnancy test before getting a COVID-19 vaccine.



Do people who are pregnant or breastfeeding need permission from their provider to get vaccinated?

No, but it may be helpful for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding to talk to their provider before getting vaccinated if they have questions.

Can getting vaccinated protect my baby from COVID-19?

Yes. Getting vaccinated reduces your risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to others, including your baby.

Recent studies of people who are pregnant and got the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines found antibodies in babies' cord blood and pregnant people's breast milk. Future studies can help us learn how these antibodies could protect babies, like other vaccines do. For example, people who are pregnant and get the whooping cough (Tdap) and flu vaccines pass antibodies to their baby that protect them during their first few months of life.



Will the vaccine affect my fertility?

Claims linking COVID-19 vaccines to fertility problems are unfounded and have no evidence supporting them. The CDC says it is safe for people who want to become pregnant to get a COVID-19 vaccine and recommends they get vaccinated.



Will the vaccine affect my menstrual cycle?

Menstrual cycle changes can be caused by many factors, like stress and changes in sleep, diet, environment and lifestyle, which are common during the COVID-19 pandemic. More research will be carried out to see if there is a link between COVID-19 vaccination and temporary menstrual changes. However, experts agree you do not need to plan getting vaccinated around your menstrual cycle and the vaccine can be given safely while menstruating.

Does the vaccine affect puberty or people's hormones?

There is no evidence that shows the vaccines have long-term effects on puberty or hormones.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am getting other vaccines?

Yes. You can get your COVID-19 vaccine before, after or at the same time you get other vaccines, including vaccines normally given during pregnancy (like Tdap and flu).



Where can I get more information?

Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and search for **COVID-19 vaccines while pregnant or breastfeeding**. For more information on the COVID-19 vaccines, visit [nyc.gov/covidvaccine](https://www.nyc.gov/covidvaccine).

If you want to speak to someone about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy, MotherToBaby experts can answer questions in English or Spanish: Call 866-626-6847, text 855-999-8525 or chat at [mothersbaby.org](https://www.mothersbaby.org). This free and confidential service is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.