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COVID-19

Information about COVID-19 Vaccines for People who Are Pregnant or Breastfeeding

Updated May 11, 2021

Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine: CDC and FDA have recommended that use of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine resume in the United States, effective April 23, 2021. However, women younger than 50 years old especially should be aware of the rare risk of blood clots with low platelets after vaccination, and that other COVID-19 vaccines are available where this risk has not been seen. If you received a J&J/Janssen vaccine, [here is what you need to know](#). Read the [CDC/FDA statement](#).

Everyone 16 years of age and older is now eligible to [get a COVID-19 vaccination](#).

Pregnant people are more likely to get severely ill with COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people. **If you are pregnant, you can receive a COVID-19 vaccine.** Getting a COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy can protect you from severe illness from COVID-19. If you have questions about getting vaccinated, a conversation with your healthcare provider might help, but is not required for vaccination.

If you are facing a decision about whether to receive a COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant, consider:

- Your risk of exposure to COVID-19
- The risks of severe illness
- The known benefits of vaccination
- The limited but growing evidence about the safety of vaccinations during pregnancy

Pregnant people are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19

Although the overall risk of severe illness is low, pregnant and recently pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared with non-pregnant people. Severe illness includes illness that requires hospitalization, intensive care, or a ventilator or special equipment to breathe, or illness that results in death. Additionally, pregnant people with COVID-19 are at increased risk of preterm birth and might be at increased risk of other adverse pregnancy outcomes compared with pregnant women without COVID-19.

Limited data are available about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant

Based on how these vaccines work in the body, experts believe they are unlikely to pose a risk for people who are pregnant. However, there are currently limited data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant people.

- Clinical trials that study the safety of COVID-19 vaccines and how well they work in pregnant people are underway or planned. Vaccine manufacturers are also collecting and reviewing data from people in the completed clinical trials who received vaccine and became pregnant.
- Studies in animals receiving a [Moderna](#), [Pfizer-BioNTech](#), or [J&J/Janssen](#) COVID-19 vaccine before or during pregnancy found no safety concerns in pregnant animals or their babies.

CDC and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) have [safety monitoring systems](#) in place to gather information about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy and will closely monitor that information. [Early data](#) [↗](#) from these systems are preliminary, but reassuring. **These data did not identify any safety concerns for pregnant people who were vaccinated or for their babies.** Most of the pregnancies reported in these systems are ongoing, so more follow-up data are needed for people vaccinated just before or early in pregnancy. We will continue to follow people vaccinated during all trimesters of pregnancy to understand effects on pregnancy and babies.

The Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines are [mRNA vaccines](#) that do not contain the live virus that causes COVID-19 and therefore, cannot give someone COVID-19. Additionally, mRNA vaccines do not interact with a person's DNA or cause genetic changes because the mRNA does not enter the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. Learn more about [how COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work](#).

The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine is a viral vector vaccine, meaning it uses a modified version of a different virus (the vector) to deliver important instructions to our cells. Vaccines that use the same viral vector have been given to pregnant people in all trimesters of pregnancy, including in a large-scale Ebola vaccination trial. No adverse pregnancy-related outcomes, including adverse outcomes that affected the infant, were associated with vaccination in these trials. Learn more about [how viral vector vaccines work](#).

If you are pregnant and receive a COVID-19 vaccine, consider participating in the v-safe pregnancy registry

If you are pregnant and have received a COVID-19 vaccine, we encourage you to enroll in [v-safe](#). V-safe is CDC's smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after vaccination. A [v-safe pregnancy registry](#) has been established to gather information on the health of pregnant people who have received a COVID-19 vaccine. If people enrolled in v-safe report that they were pregnant at the time of vaccination or after vaccination, the registry staff might contact them to learn more. Participation is **voluntary**, and **participants may opt out at any time**.

Getting vaccinated is a personal choice

If you are pregnant, you can receive a COVID-19 vaccine. You may want to have a conversation with your healthcare provider to help you decide whether to receive a vaccine that has been authorized for use [under Emergency Use Authorization](#). While a conversation with your healthcare provider may be helpful, it is not required prior to vaccination.

Key considerations you can discuss with your healthcare provider include:

- How likely you are to being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19
- Risks of COVID-19 to you and the potential risks to your fetus or infant
- What is known about COVID-19 vaccines:
 - How well they work to develop protection in the body
 - Known side effects of vaccination
 - Limited, but growing, information on the safety of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy
 - How vaccination might pass antibodies to the fetus. Recent reports have shown that people who have received COVID-19 mRNA vaccines during pregnancy (mostly during their third trimester) have passed antibodies to their fetuses, which could help protect them after birth.

If you are pregnant and have questions about COVID-19 vaccine

If you would like to speak to someone about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy, please contact MotherToBaby. MotherToBaby experts are available to answer questions in English or Spanish by phone or chat. The free and confidential service is available Monday–Friday 8am–5pm (local time). To reach MotherToBaby:

- Call 1-866-626-6847
- Chat live or send an email [MotherToBaby](#) [↗](#)

Follow recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 after vaccination

If you are pregnant and decide to get vaccinated, you may be able to start doing some things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic after you are fully vaccinated. Learn more about what you can do [when you have been fully vaccinated](#).

Vaccine side effects

Side effects can occur after receiving any of the available COVID-19 vaccines, especially after the second dose for vaccines that require two doses. Pregnant people have not reported different side effects from non-pregnant people after vaccination with mRNA vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines). If you experience fever following vaccination you should take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) because fever —for any reason— has been associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes. Learn more at [What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#).

Although rare, some people have had allergic reactions after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk with your healthcare provider if you have a history of allergic reaction to any other vaccine or injectable therapy (intramuscular, intravenous, or subcutaneous).

Key considerations you can discuss with your healthcare provider include:

- The unknown risks of developing a severe allergic reaction
- The benefits of vaccination

If you have an allergic reaction after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy, you can receive treatment for it.

People who are breastfeeding

Clinical trials for the COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use under an Emergency Use Authorization in the United States did not include people who are breastfeeding. Because the vaccines have not been studied on lactating people, there are no data available on the:

- Safety of COVID-19 vaccines in lactating people
- Effects of vaccination on the breastfed baby
- Effects on milk production or excretion

Based on how these vaccines work in the body, COVID-19 vaccines are thought not to be a risk to lactating people or their breastfeeding babies. Therefore, **lactating people can receive a COVID-19 vaccine**. Recent reports have shown that breastfeeding people who have received COVID-19 mRNA vaccines have antibodies in their breastmilk, which could help protect their babies. More data are needed to determine what protection these antibodies may provide to the baby.

People who would like to have a baby

If you are trying to become pregnant now or want to get pregnant in the future, you can receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems—problems trying to get pregnant. CDC does not recommend routine pregnancy testing before COVID-19 vaccination. If you are trying to become pregnant, you do not need to avoid pregnancy after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Like with all vaccines, scientists are studying COVID-19 vaccines carefully for side effects now and will report findings as they become available.

Find a COVID-19 Vaccine: Search vaccines.gov, text your zip code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you.

More Information

[Interim Clinical Considerations for the Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Available in the United States](#)

[Preliminary Findings of mRNA Covid-19 Vaccine Safety in Pregnant Persons | NEJM](#) 

[The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Interim Recommendation for Use of Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

[American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists \(ACOG\) Recommendations for Vaccinating Pregnant People](#)  

[Vaccinating Pregnant and Lactating Patients Against COVID-19 | ACOG](#) 

[Risk factors for illness severity among pregnant women with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection – Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network, 20 state, local, and territorial health departments, March 29, 2020 -January 8, 2021](#) 

[The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Interim Recommendation for Use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccines and Severe Allergic Reactions](#)

[Interim Considerations: Preparing for the Potential Management of Anaphylaxis after COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

[The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Updated Interim Recommendation for Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

[Mother to Baby](#)  : A suggested resource for information for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

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