Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

COVID-19

Get Vaccinated: Find a vaccine and learn what you can do after you're fully vaccinated.

Pregnant and Recently Pregnant People

At increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

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Vaccine Information for People who Are Pregnant or Breastfeeding.

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 to non-pregnant people.

What You Need to Know

- **Although the overall risk of severe illness is low, pregnant people and recently pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared to non-pregnant people.**[1]

- Having certain underlying medical conditions, and other factors, including age, can further increase a pregnant or recently pregnant person's risk for developing severe illness.

- Pregnant people with COVID-19 are also at increased risk for preterm birth (delivering the baby earlier than 37 weeks) and might be at increased risk for other poor pregnancy outcomes.

- Pregnant and recently pregnant people and people who live with or visit them need to take steps to protect themselves from getting sick with COVID-19.

Increased Risk of Severe Illness

Pregnant and recently pregnant people (for at least 42 days following end of pregnancy) are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people.[1-3] Changes that occur in the body during pregnancy that increase risk for severe illness from respiratory viral infections like COVID-19 can continue after pregnancy. For example, increased risk for developing blood clots during pregnancy can continue after pregnancy and increase the risk for severe illness as seen in cases of H1N1 influenza in recently pregnant people.

Severe illness means that a person with COVID-19 may require:

- Hospitalization
- Intensive care
- A ventilator or special equipment to help them breathe

People with COVID-19 who become severely ill might even die.

See why pregnancy is included in the list of underlying medical conditions that increase a person's risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Certain Factors Can Increase Risk

Other factors can further increase a pregnant or recently pregnant person's risk for experiencing severe illness from COVID-19, such as having certain underlying medical conditions or being older than a certain age.[3] People with an underlying medical condition should continue to follow the treatment plan prescribed by their healthcare provider.

Conditions in the places where pregnant and recently pregnant people live, learn, work, play, and worship also affect health risks and outcomes, such as getting sick with COVID-19 or developing severe illness. For example, people who are pregnant and work in places where they cannot keep their distance from people who might be sick, like healthcare providers, are at increased risk for getting sick and developing severe illness from COVID-19. Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put pregnant people from some racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick from COVID-19.

Understanding additional factors that can put pregnant and recently pregnant people at an increased risk can help them make decisions about what kind of precautions to take to protect themselves from infection.

Effect on Pregnancy Outcomes

Pregnant people with COVID-19 are at increased risk for preterm birth[2,4] (delivering the baby earlier than 37 weeks) and might be at increased risk for other poor outcomes related to pregnancy compared to pregnant people without COVID-19. Other poor

pregnancy outcomes, such as pregnancy loss,[2] have been reported.

> See the latest data on birth and infant outcomes among pregnant women with COVID-19

Reducing Your Risk of Getting COVID-19

It is especially important for pregnant and recently pregnant people, and those who live or visit with them, to take steps to protect themselves from getting COVID-19.

There is no way to have zero risk of infection, so it is important to know how to be as safe as possible. Consider your own personal situation and the risk for you, your family, and your community when deciding whether or not to go out or interact with people who do not live with you. Ensure you and the people who live with you are taking steps to protect themselves.

The best ways to protect yourself and to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 are to:

- Consider getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk with your healthcare provider if you have questions about getting vaccinated.
- Limit in-person interactions with people who might have been exposed to or who might be infected with COVID-19, including people within your household, as much as possible.
- Take steps to prevent getting COVID-19 when you do interact with others.
  - Wear a mask. Avoid others who are not wearing masks or ask others around you to wear a mask that fully covers the nose and mouth and fits well to the face.
  - Keep space between yourself and others (stay at least 6 feet away, which is about 2 arm lengths).
  - Avoid crowds.

- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Then wash your hands.
- Clean surfaces and things you touch often with soap or detergent.
- Keep at least a 30-day supply of prescription and nonprescription medicines. Talk to your healthcare provider, insurer, or pharmacist about getting an extra supply (for example, more than 30 days) of prescription medicines, if possible, to reduce your trips to the pharmacy.

When going out or interacting with others outside your immediate household, wear a mask.

COVID-19 Vaccine and Pregnancy

If you are pregnant or were recently pregnant you can receive a COVID-19 vaccine. If you have questions about getting vaccinated, talking with your healthcare provider might help, but is not required.

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 [↗]

If you 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.

Staying Healthy During and After Your Pregnancy

- **Keep all of your healthcare appointments during and after pregnancy.** Visit your healthcare provider for all recommended appointments. If you're concerned about going to your appointments because of COVID-19, ask your healthcare provider what steps they are taking to separate healthy patients from those who might be sick or ask about telemedicine options. If you need help finding a healthcare provider, contact your nearest hospital clinic, community health center [↗] or health department.

  - Talk to your healthcare provider about how to stay healthy and take care of yourself and your baby.

  - Ask questions you have about the best place to deliver your baby. Delivering your baby is always safest under the care of trained healthcare professionals.

  - You should also talk to your healthcare provider if you think you are experiencing depression during or after pregnancy.

- **Get recommended vaccines during pregnancy.** These vaccines can help protect you and your baby.

  - Get a flu vaccine every year. Others living in your household should also get vaccinated to protect themselves and you.

  - Get the whooping cough (Tdap) vaccine during pregnancy to protect your baby against whooping cough, which can have similar symptoms to COVID-19. CDC recommends all women receive a Tdap vaccine during each pregnancy.

- **Call your healthcare provider if you have any concerns about your pregnancy or if you get sick or think that you may have COVID-19.**

- **Do not delay getting emergency care because of COVID-19.** Emergency departments have steps in place to protect you from getting COVID-19 if you need care. If you need emergency help, call 911 right away.

- Tell them that you are pregnant or were recently pregnant and are having an emergency. If someone else is driving to the emergency department, call while you are on the way. If you must drive yourself, call before you start driving.

Seek medical care immediately if you experience any urgent maternal warning signs and symptoms (for example, headache that won't go away, dizziness, fever, severe swelling of hand, face, arm or leg, trouble breathing, chest pain or fast-beating heart, severe nausea and throwing up, or vaginal bleeding or discharge during or after pregnancy). These symptoms could indicate a potentially life-threatening complication.

If You Are Sick or Think You Were Exposed to COVID-19

- If you have symptoms of COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider within 24 hours, and follow steps for when you feel sick.
- If you or someone you know has COVID-19 emergency warning signs (for example, trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone), **call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility.**
  - Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.
- If you think you might have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider. If you don't have a healthcare provider, contact your nearest community health center ☒ or health department.

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, learn about caring for newborns when the mother has COVID-19.

Read information about breastfeeding and caring for newborns.

References

1. Zambrano LD, Ellington S, Strid P, et al. Update: Characteristics of Symptomatic Women of Reproductive Age with Laboratory-Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection by Pregnancy Status — United States, January 22–October 3, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1641–1647. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6944e3external icon. ↗

2. Allotey, J., et al., Clinical manifestations, risk factors, and maternal and perinatal outcomes of coronavirus disease 2019 in pregnancy: living systematic review and meta-analysis. BMJ, 2020. 370: p. m3320. doi: 10.1136/bmj.m3320 ↗

3. Galang RR, Newton SM, Woodworth KR, et al. 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. Preprint. medRxiv. 2021; 2021.02.27.21252169. Published 2021 Mar 1. doi: 10.1101/2021.02.27.21252169 ↗

4. Woodworth KR, Olsen EO, Neelam V, et al. Birth and Infant Outcomes Following Laboratory-Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection in Pregnancy — SET-NET, 16 Jurisdictions, March 29–October 14, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1635–1640. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6944e2external icon. ↗

More Information

COVID-19 Toolkit for Pregnant People and New Parents

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

Breastfeeding and Caring for Newborns

Urgent Maternal Warning Signs

Things to Know about the COVID-19 Pandemic

How to Protect Yourself & Others

What to Do If You Are Sick

Coping with Stress

Frequently Asked Questions

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