

## COVID-19 and Reproductive Health

It is understandable that people have concerns about the impacts of being vaccinated on their pregnancy or their desire to become pregnant. Pregnant people were not part of the clinical trials testing the vaccines, but there is good news to share regarding vaccines, pregnancy, and fertility!

### **Can I safely be vaccinated if I'm pregnant?**

**Yes!** Studies are showing that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are safe for pregnant individuals and the child they are carrying.<sup>1</sup> In addition, vaccinated women can pass protective antibodies to their unborn child through their bloodstreams and to their infants through breast milk. Research is also showing there are no differences in birth outcomes for vaccinated pregnant people and unvaccinated people.<sup>2</sup>

Studies for the Janssen vaccine and pregnancy are not yet available, but the CDC has concluded pregnant people can safely receive this vaccine. Women under the age of 50 should be counseled about the rare risk of blood clots from the Janssen vaccine, however. More studies on pregnancy and all the COVID-19 vaccines are on-going.

### **Pregnant people at higher risk for severe COVID-19**

What is known, is that if unvaccinated pregnant people become ill with COVID-19, they are at considerably higher risk for severe disease than non-pregnant people. Because of changes to women's bodies during pregnancy, they are more vulnerable. This is especially true for people with underlying health conditions such as diabetes or obesity.<sup>3</sup> Studies have also shown pregnant people who become ill with COVID-19 have increased risk of difficult birth outcomes including premature birth, preeclampsia, and emergency Cesarean delivery.<sup>4</sup>

Because of these risks, the CDC has recommended that coronavirus vaccines be made available to pregnant people and encourages women to talk to their doctors about getting a vaccine. If you are pregnant and considering getting the vaccine, you might want to have a conversation with your health care team to help you decide whether to get vaccinated. While such a conversation might be helpful, it is not required before vaccination.

### **Vaccinations and fertility**

There is no evidence that any of the COVID-19 vaccines cause fertility problems in women or men. Many women of child-bearing age participated in the vaccine clinical trials or have since received the vaccines, and become pregnant.

In December 2020, a false rumor was started about coronavirus vaccines affecting fertility. This rumor has been completely discredited by American researchers.<sup>5</sup> The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists states "As experts in reproductive health, we continue to recommend that the vaccine be available to pregnant individuals. We also assure patients that there is no evidence that the vaccine can lead to loss of fertility."<sup>6</sup>

### **CDC Safety Monitoring**

The CDC has on-going safety monitoring for pregnancy and COVID-19 and encourages people who were pregnant at the time of vaccination, or shortly thereafter, to consider participating in the [COVID-19 Vaccine Pregnancy Registry](#). The registry will be gathering information to help build the evidence about the safety of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy.

<sup>1</sup> <https://news.northwestern.edu/stories/2021/05/covid-19-vaccine-does-not-damage-the-placenta/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/health/vaccine-pregnancy.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.acog.org/covid-19/covid-19-vaccines-and-pregnancy-conversation-guide-for-clinicians>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.ajog.org/article/S0002-9378\(21\)00565-2/pdf](https://www.ajog.org/article/S0002-9378(21)00565-2/pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/covid-19-vaccine-myths-debunked/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.acog.org/news/news-releases/2021/02/medical-experts-assert-covid-vaccines-do-not-impact-fertility>