The Flu

What is the Risk to Pregnant People and Babies?

The Flu can be especially dangerous for pregnant people and their babies.

Pregnant people with the Flu are at higher risk for complications like pneumonia or preeclampsia, and are more likely to be hospitalized.

Their babies are at higher risk for early birth, low birth weight, and birth defects.

Is the Vaccine Safe?

Flu vaccines have been given to millions of people over many years with an excellent safety record. Flu vaccines come in two forms - a shot (dead flu viruses) and a nasal spray (weakened flu viruses).

- The shot does not contain live virus and cannot make anyone sick. It is safe for pregnant people.
- The nasal spray is not recommended for pregnant people.

Why Should I Get the Flu Vaccine?

Getting a Flu shot can reduce a pregnant person’s risk of being hospitalized with the Flu by an average of 40%.

Pregnant people who get a flu shot are also helping to protect their babies for the first several months after their birth, when they are too young to get vaccinated.

Staying healthy during pregnancy is not just important for the health of the pregnant person, but also for the health of the baby. Pregnant people, their families, and anyone coming in close contact with a baby should talk to their healthcare providers about getting these vaccines.
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**Pertussis / Whooping Cough**

**What is the Risk to Pregnant People and Babies?**

Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, can cause serious and life-threatening complications in young babies.

More than 50% of babies that contract whooping cough end up hospitalized with breathing problems.

On average, 10,000 to 50,000 people get whooping cough each year, and that number has been increasing in recent years.

**Is the Vaccine Safe?**

The Tdap vaccine, which protects against Whooping Cough, is very safe for pregnant people and their babies.

It does not contain live virus and cannot make anyone sick.

**Why Should I Get the Tdap Vaccine?**

People who get the Tdap vaccine during pregnancy pass antibodies to their baby during pregnancy. Getting a Tdap vaccine during every pregnancy - between 27 and 36 weeks - gives the baby the greatest number of protective antibodies possible and lowers the risk of whooping cough in babies younger than 2 months by 78%.

People who get the Tdap vaccine during pregnancy may pass antibodies to their babies through breast milk after the baby is born. This will help to protect the baby until they can get their own vaccine.

**References**


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**COVID-19**

**What is the Risk to Pregnant People and Babies?**

People who are pregnant are at an **increased risk for severe illness** from COVID-19.

People with severe illness from COVID-19 **may require hospitalization, intensive care, or special equipment to breathe.** They are at **higher risk for long term complications and death.**

Even with mild symptoms, people who have COVID-19 during pregnancy and their babies are at **increased risk of pregnancy complications, including early birth, preeclampsia, low birth weight and stillbirth.**

**Is the Vaccine Safe?**

COVID-19 vaccines **do not contain live virus and cannot make anyone sick.**

There is **no evidence of increased risk for miscarriage or fertility problems** in people who received a COVID-19 vaccine.

There are **no reported adverse events caused by the COVID-19 vaccine in babies born to people who received the vaccine in pregnancy.**

**Why Should I Get the COVID Vaccine?**

Getting the COVID-19 vaccines is the **best way to prevent complications from a COVID-19 infection.**

Antibodies made in a pregnant person’s body after getting the vaccine **may pass through the placenta and provide protection for the baby.**

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**References**


