



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): Vaccine Decision Making for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women

Should I get the COVID-19 Vaccine?

Experts such as the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine strongly recommend that pregnant women have access to COVID-19 vaccines. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have advised that the vaccine not be withheld from pregnant individuals who meet the criteria for vaccination.

- The mRNA vaccines have shown no safety concerns for you.
- The use of the COVID-19 vaccine in pregnant women has shown no safety concerns for your baby.
- Infants born after their mothers had the vaccine have been found to have disease-fighting COVID-19 antibodies.



Here are facts to help you decide:

The COVID-19 infection presents a **higher risk** to pregnant women:

- A higher chance of needing to be in an Intensive Care Unit
- More likely to need a breathing machine called a ventilator
- Higher risk for early (pre-term) birth
- Higher death rates have occurred

The COVID-19 vaccine will help prevent a large number of COVID-19 infections.

The COVID-19 vaccine will not give you the infection.

Some effects from the vaccine can occur, such as injection site reactions, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever.

- Tylenol can be used during pregnancy for a high fever according to the CDC.

What about breastfeeding?

Experts such as the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine report there is no reason to believe that the vaccine affects the safety of breastmilk. Antibodies formed do pass from the breastmilk to the infant and may protect the infant also.



What is known about the new vaccines?

Two of the new vaccines are messenger RNA vaccines (mRNA). A brief message like a Snapchat goes to the cell with a protein causing an immune response. The mRNA goes away quickly. It does not alter DNA or cause infertility.

A third vaccine given as a single dose has been released. Viral vector vaccines use a modified version of a different virus (the vector) to deliver important instructions to cells. Very rare findings of blood clots with low platelets (thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome [TTS]) were seen in women younger than 50 years old. After careful study, the benefits of the vaccine were found to far out-weigh the possible risks.

Caring for you

Sanford Health follows guidance from respected experts to keep you and your baby healthy. Safety precautions are taken at all of our locations.

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