



COVID-19 Vaccination for Pregnant People to Prevent Serious Illness, Deaths, and Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends urgent action to increase COVID-19 vaccination among people who are pregnant, recently pregnant (including those who are lactating), who are trying to become pregnant now, or who might become pregnant in the future. **CDC strongly recommends COVID-19 vaccination either before or during pregnancy because the benefits of vaccination outweigh known or potential risks.** As of September 27, 2021, more than 125,000 laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases have been reported in pregnant people, including more than 22,000 hospitalized cases and 161 deaths. The highest number of COVID-19-related deaths in pregnant people (n=22) in a single month of the pandemic was reported in August 2021. Data from the COVID-19-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network (COVID-NET) in 2021 indicate that approximately 97% of pregnant people hospitalized (either for illness or for labor and delivery) with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection were unvaccinated. *In addition to the risks of severe illness and death for pregnant and recently pregnant people, there is an increased risk for adverse pregnancy and neonatal outcomes, including preterm birth and admission of their neonate(s) to an intensive care unit (ICU).* Other adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as stillbirth, have been reported. **Despite the known risks of COVID-19, as of September 18, 2021, 31.0% of pregnant people were fully vaccinated before or during their pregnancy. In addition, there are racial and ethnic disparities in vaccination coverage for pregnant people.**

Recommendations for Healthcare Providers

- Ensure all clinical staff are aware of the recommendation for vaccination of people before and during pregnancy and the serious risks of COVID-19 to pregnant and recently pregnant people and their fetuses/infants.
- Increase outreach efforts to encourage, recommend, and offer vaccination to people who are pregnant, recently pregnant (including those who are lactating), who are trying to get pregnant now, or who might become pregnant in the future. A strong recommendation from a healthcare provider is a critical factor in COVID-19 vaccine acceptance and can make a meaningful difference to protect the health of pregnant and recently pregnant people and their fetuses/infants from COVID-19.
- For healthcare providers who see patients who are pregnant, recently pregnant (including those who are lactating), who are trying to get pregnant now, or who might become pregnant in the future:
 - o Review patients' COVID-19 vaccination status at each pre- and post-natal visit and discuss COVID-19 vaccination with those who are unvaccinated.
 - o Reach out to your patients with messages encouraging and recommending the critical need for vaccination.
 - o Remind patients that vaccination is recommended even for those with prior COVID-19 infections. Studies have shown that vaccination provides increased protection in people who have recovered from COVID-19.
 - o Support efforts to ensure people receiving the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (i.e., Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna) return for their second dose to complete the



series as close as possible to the recommended interval. Consider a booster dose in eligible pregnant persons.

o Communicate accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines and confront [misinformation](#) with evidence-based messaging from credible sources. For example, there is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.

- [Become a COVID-19 vaccine provider](#) and vaccinate patients during their visit.

The full CDC Health Advisory is available at the following link:

https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/pdf/CDC_HAN_453.pdf