



COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ for Pregnant and Lactating women

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) support the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine in all women over the age of 16 including those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or actively trying to become pregnant.

Q. How does the COVID-19 vaccine work? Pfizer and Moderna:

- The messenger RNA vaccines do not contain a live virus or interact with genetic material DNA or enter the nucleus of a cell.
- The vaccine mimics how viruses work. The vaccine has the "recipe" for a small piece of the spike protein of the virus. This will cause the body to recognize it as foreign and lead to an immune response.

Q. Why should I receive the vaccine while pregnant?

- Pregnant individuals are at increased risk for severe illness and outcomes with COVID-19 infections.
- They are 3 times more likely to be admitted to the ICU and placed on a ventilator and 2 times more likely to die if pregnant and infected with the COVID-19 virus.
- Additional health issues including obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure increase the risk of severe illness.

Q. Is there a live virus in the vaccine? Will it give me COVID?

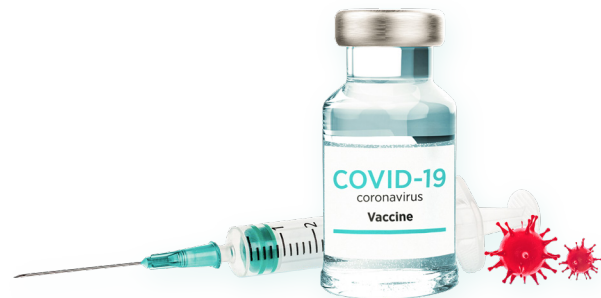
- No, no live virus in the vaccine and in turn will not give people COVID.

Q. What side effects can I expect with the COVID-19 vaccine?

- Because the vaccine works by activating our immune system, you may experience some side effects including pain and swelling at injection site, fever, body aches etc for several days. You may take acetaminophen/Tylenol for symptoms.

Q. Will the vaccine induce a positive test?

- No you will not have a + PCR test due to receiving the vaccine. Over time you will have + antibodies as a result of the vaccine, unable to tell if the antibodies are from the vaccine or previous infection.





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Q. May I receive the vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

- Yes. The FDA issued the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) and has maintained that the vaccine may be administered to pregnant and lactating patients if they chose. ACOG and SMFM both support administration of the COVID-19 vaccine to all women over the age of 16 including pregnant and breastfeeding individuals.
- There is limited data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant. The available data from the DART studies (Data from Developmental and Reproductive Toxicity-DART) are ongoing and do not demonstrate any contraindications. Because mRNA vaccines do not interact with genetic material DNA or enter the nucleus of the cell, it cannot alter human DNA.

Q. Will getting the vaccine while pregnant cause any genetic problems for my baby?

- No. The mRNA vaccine is not a live virus vaccine and does not enter the nucleus of a cell. The vaccine cannot alter human DNA, as a result cannot cause any genetic changes.
- Because there are no safety data specific to mRNA vaccine use in pregnant or lactating individuals, the potential risk of receiving the vaccine is unknown.

- The available animal studies so far have not demonstrated any major safety issues. (Data from Developmental and Reproductive Toxicity-DART)

Q. Can I breastfeed my baby if I get the vaccine?

- Yes. There is no reason to believe that the vaccine can affect the safety of breastmilk. The vaccine does not contain a live virus so there is no risk of your breastmilk containing the virus. Your immune system will create antibodies that will pass into the breast milk and help to protect your baby from infection.

Q. Who recommends the vaccine for pregnant individuals?

- ACOG (American college of Obstetrics and Gynecologists)
- SMFM (Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine)
- Both of these national colleges recommend that the vaccine should not be withheld from pregnant and lactating individuals who meet criteria for the vaccination.

Q. Should I receive the vaccine if I've previously been diagnosed with COVID-19?

- Yes. The vaccine should be offered regardless of history of prior symptomatic or asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection.



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Q. Should I receive the vaccine if I am actively trying to become pregnant?

- Yes. You do not need to have a pregnancy test prior to receiving the vaccination. The vaccine is recommended for all women over 16 years of age who are pregnant, lactating or actively trying to become pregnant. There are no trimester-specific vaccine considerations at this time.

1. CDC MMR 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. 11/6/2020/69 (44): 1641-1647. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6944e3.htm>
2. ACOG Vaccinating Pregnant and Lactating Patients Against COVID-19 Practice Advisory 12/13/20. <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/practice-advisory/articles/2020/12/vaccinating-pregnant-and-lactating-patients-against-covid-19>
3. SMFM Statement: SARS-CoV-2 Vaccination in Pregnancy 12/1/20. [https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.smfm.org/media/2591/SMFM_Vaccine_Statement_12-1-20_\(final\).pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.smfm.org/media/2591/SMFM_Vaccine_Statement_12-1-20_(final).pdf)
4. SMFM Experts in High Risk Pregnancy Respond to the FDA's Decision to Offer the Newly Approved COVID-19 Vaccine to Pregnant and Lactating People 12/11/20 https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.smfm.org/media/2632/FDA_final.pdf
5. SMFM Provider Considerations for Engaging in COVID-19 Vaccination Consideration 12/15/20. [file:///U:/Downloads/Provider_Considerations_for_Engaging_in_COVID_Vaccination_Considerations_12-15-20_\(final\).pdf](file:///U:/Downloads/Provider_Considerations_for_Engaging_in_COVID_Vaccination_Considerations_12-15-20_(final).pdf)
6. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/vaccination.html>

FOR GENERAL INFO ABOUT CORONAVIRUS, GO TO [GRHC.ORG/HUB](https://grhc.org/hub) OR CALL THE GRHC CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE AT (520) 550-6079.
If you have any questions about the vaccine, please call the GRHC COVID-19 HOTLINE AT (520) 550-6079.



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