

Get the facts about the COVID-19 vaccine

There have been many misleading claims about COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy and their effect on fertility and pregnancy. Misinformation may be an unnecessary source of anxiety, falsely undermine the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines and be a barrier to getting vaccinated.

Here are the facts about COVID-19 vaccines, fertility and pregnancy.



There is increasing evidence from across the world to show COVID-19 vaccines are safe in pregnancy.

Myth
We don't have enough information to say COVID-19 vaccines are safe in pregnancy

Multiple studies have been published involving women who were pregnant when they received their COVID-19 vaccines or have become pregnant shortly after vaccination. These studies show that the COVID-19 vaccines are not associated with an increased risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, babies being smaller than expected, pre-term birth or other adverse pregnancy outcomes.

COVID-19 vaccines have been given to hundreds of thousands of pregnant women worldwide and professional organisations around the world strongly recommend COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy.

Fact

There are now multiple studies with clear evidence that COVID-19 vaccines are safe in pregnancy.

Myth
The vaccines have not been studied in women who are pregnant

Although pregnant women were not specifically included in the initial clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines, evidence of the safety now comes from multiple studies which assessed side effects and pregnancy outcomes in women who received the COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy. These studies collected information from women themselves, from healthcare professionals through reports submitted to medicines regulators and from data collected as part of the care these women received when having their baby.

Together this evidence indicates that COVID-19 vaccines are safe in pregnancy. Clinical trials assessing COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant women are currently ongoing.

Fact

There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines cause menstrual disorders.

Myth
COVID-19 vaccines can cause menstrual disorders

Menstrual disorders are very common in the general population and can occur without an underlying medical condition. There is also evidence that one in four women infected with COVID-19 experienced changes to their menstrual cycle. It may be that activation of the immune system, for example, an infection or vaccination, affects the menstrual cycle.

These menstrual changes are temporary and most people who report a change to their period after vaccination find that it returns to normal the following cycle. There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines cause menstrual disorders.

Fact

There is no evidence that vaccination affects fertility

Myth
COVID-19 vaccines can affect fertility

There has been some misinformation that the COVID-19 vaccine affects fertility due to similarities between the target of the antibodies produced after vaccination (the COVID-19 spike protein) and proteins which are responsible for the growth and attachment of the placenta during pregnancy.

This is not true. Laboratory studies have shown that these proteins are not similar enough to cause fertility problems and many women have reported that they have gotten pregnant since receiving the vaccine.

Fact

COVID-19 vaccines do not cause miscarriage

Myth
Vaccines can cause miscarriage

In any pregnancy, the rate of miscarriage is between 12% and 18%. The rate of miscarriage in women who are pregnant and have been vaccinated has been shown to be the same as the background rate of miscarriage.

For example, no increased risk of miscarriage following vaccination was found among 2,456 women vaccinated before 20 weeks' gestation in the US. Another study on 105,446 pregnancies found that people who experienced a miscarriage were no more likely to have received a COVID-19 vaccine than those who did not experience a miscarriage. Finally, the rate of miscarriage was not different in 1,387 vaccinated and 1,427 unvaccinated women in Israel.

Fact

Pregnant women can get their COVID-19 vaccine at any stage in pregnancy

Myth
COVID-19 vaccination should be avoided in the first trimester

Pregnant women can get their COVID-19 vaccine at any stage in pregnancy. Women were previously recommended to get the COVID-19 vaccine after 14 weeks' gestation to avoid a high fever in early pregnancy which may be associated with a small increase in the risk of miscarriage. Studies have now shown that there is no evidence that receiving the COVID-19 vaccine in the first trimester increases the risk of miscarriage.

Recommendations have changed and pregnant women can get their COVID-19 vaccine at any stage in pregnancy.

Fact

Speak to your doctor, midwife or pharmacist to get trusted information about COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy