Five Reasons to Get the Covid-19 Vaccine If You’re Pregnant

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The COVID-19 vaccine is available to pregnant women at any point during their pregnancy. To date at least 62,000 women in the UK have received at least one dose. If you’re expecting, here are five key reasons why you should get the jab.

1. Getting two doses is the best way to protect you from COVID-19

If you’re pregnant, getting both doses of your vaccine is the best way to protect yourself – and those around you – against COVID-19. Although the overall risk from COVID-19 for pregnant women and their unborn babies is low, some women may become seriously unwell and need hospital treatment in later pregnancy. The vast majority of pregnant women who become seriously ill with COVID-19 are unvaccinated.
2. COVID-19 disease can be serious in pregnancy

While overall the risk remains low, pregnant women with COVID-19 have a higher risk of intensive care admission than women of the same age who are not pregnant. Women with COVID-19 disease are also 2 to 3 times more likely to have their babies early than women without COVID-19. Pregnant women with underlying clinical conditions are at even higher risk of suffering serious complications from COVID-19.

3. The COVID-19 vaccines used in the UK are safe and effective for pregnant women

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which advised the UK government that pregnant women should be offered the vaccines, looks at all the available evidence on the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines before making recommendations about who should have them.

The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are recommended for pregnant women in the UK because these vaccines have been given to over 140,000 pregnant women in the US and the data has not raised any safety concerns. At least 62,000 thousand pregnant women in the UK have had at least one dose of the vaccine, also without any immediate safety concerns.

Pregnant women who have already had the AstraZeneca vaccine however are advised to complete with the same vaccine. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to discuss these with a healthcare professional looking after you in your pregnancy.

4. The vaccines might offer your unborn child some protection against COVID-19

Research suggests that protective antibodies in response to the vaccines can be passed from mother to newborn during pregnancy and through breast milk after birth. While it’s likely these would help protect newborns from COVID-19, more research is needed to determine how much protection these antibodies would give or how long that protection would last.

5. There is no current evidence of any serious side effects for pregnant women

The Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) thoroughly monitors any suspected side effects involving pregnancy and COVID-19 vaccination.

The current evidence does not show an increased risk of miscarriage or stillbirth following vaccination against COVID-19. There is also no pattern from the reports to suggest that any of the COVID-19 vaccines used in the UK increase the risk of congenital anomalies or birth complications.
The vaccines do not contain living organisms that can multiply in the body, so they cannot infect an unborn baby in the womb.

For further advice, speak to a healthcare professional looking after you in your pregnancy.

You can also find more information below:

- Further resources: The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and Royal College of Midwives (RCM) have a decision guide about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and other helpful information, available here.
- More safety information: The latest information from the MHRA is available here.

**Letter and translations to help people without an NHS number access the COVID-19 vaccine and register with a GP**

A letter from Dr Nikki Kanani to reassure people without an NHS number, including migrants, about their entitlement to the COVID-19 vaccine and if they wish to, how to register at a GP practice has now been translated into 23 languages.

Circulated via the Home Office and local housing, homeless and migrant teams; it explains that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and available to every adult living in the UK, free of charge without any immigration checks. The letter also stresses that people do not need to have to be registered at a GP practice or have an NHS number to get the COVID-19 vaccine and what people need to do in these circumstances. You can access the letter and the translations online here and access guidance to help you to support the community on the COVID-19 vaccine equalities connect and exchange hub.

Translations are available in Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, Estonian, Farsi, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Latvian, Polish, Portuguese Brazilian, Punjabi, Romani, Romanian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu.

**Moderna Vaccine and Use in Children**

Colleagues will have seen in the media that Moderna (Spikevax®) covid-19 vaccine has now been approved by the MHRA for use in those aged 12 or over, however we will need to wait for JCVI guidance on use of Moderna in those aged 12-17 before a national recommendation for use of this vaccine in children and young people can be made.

In addition, the National Protocol and PGD will need to be updated, however where there is a clinical need to use Moderna COVID-19 vaccine then it could be given under the direction of a prescriber using a PSD. This would need to be done on a case by case basis, based on a clinical review by the prescriber.
Top Tips for Supporting Children and Young People During Vaccination

Please see poster and guidance below which is also attached for your reference.

Further resources

Derbyshire Community Health Services: Fear of needles (needle phobia) – and how to deal with it!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRIJ6OQgoRw

Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust: Overcoming your needle phobia (fear of needles).


NHS England: How to put someone into the recovery position. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfQeP6mfr6w

NHS England: Supporting people with a learning disability and autistic people to get the COVID-19 vaccination.

POEMS for Children (charity). https://www.poemsforchildren.co.uk/


Final Weeks: Funding Support to Help You Access Additional Staff

Funding support to access additional workforce via the National Workforce Support Offer is available to all PCNs and Communities Pharmacies and is available until end of August. The National Workforce Support Offer provides sites with added flexibility to access additional capacity, over and above local staffing, and helps with local workforce resilience. Workforce include additional trained (clinical and non-clinical) staff and volunteers ready and available to be deployed across the country from NHS Professionals, NHS Volunteer Responders, St John Ambulance as well as rapid deployment from the Vaccine Operational Support Teams (VOST). The VOST teams replicate the rapid deployment support that the military provided to Local Vaccination Services and are suitably qualified and comprise three registered healthcare professionals and three unregistered staff who can cover identified gaps or provide additional capacity, where required. See below for availability in your region for next week.

Please contact your lead employer for more details in your area and access to both clinical and non-clinical staff and volunteers, as well as more details about the funding support.

You can also access more detail in the National Workforce Support Offer Toolkit as well as LVS Workforce and you can contact the national workforce team direct via PCNCP.workforceescalation@nhs.net

Having a Vaccine for Coronavirus – Wordless Story

Having a Vaccine for Coronavirus – from Books Beyond Words

This wordless story is designed to help people think about the coronavirus vaccine and what having the vaccine will mean.

The pictures can help people to ask questions and talk through their feelings and concerns with a supporter so that they feel prepared when they receive their invitation.

Having+a+Vaccine+for+Coronavirus.pdf (squarespace.com)

All COVID-19 vaccination queries and incidents should be directed to: england.swicars@nhs.net