

FACT

The Truth About COVID Vaccines, Fertility and Childbirth

Some of the most commonly discussed myths surrounding COVID-19 involve the vaccines' impacts on women of childbearing age. From expecting mothers to those trying to get pregnant, the misinformation is harmful to everyone involved. Get the facts on COVID-19 vaccines and their relation to fertility and childbirth below.

FACT: COVID-19 vaccines protect new mothers and mothers-to-be from serious illness.

Pregnant and recently pregnant women are at an increased risk for severe illness, including preterm birth, from COVID-19 compared to nonpregnant women. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that all eligible persons, including pregnant and lactating individuals, receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

FACT: The vaccines have been shown to have no impact on fertility.

There is no evidence that female or male fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine will not affect the fertility of women who are seeking to become pregnant, including through in vitro fertilization methods. While pregnant women were excluded from the initial Pfizer vaccine trial, 23 women in the trial became pregnant after receiving the vaccine and delivered healthy babies.

FACT: The vaccine will not affect the protein involved in the growth and attachment of the placenta during pregnancy.

The COVID-19 vaccine encourages the body to create copies of the spike protein found on the coronavirus's surface and "teaches" the body's immune system to fight the virus that has that specific spike protein on it. The spike proteins targeted by the vaccines are completely different than the protein associated with placental growth and attachment.

FACT: You cannot contract COVID-19 from getting the vaccine.

None of the vaccines being used in the U.S. contain a live virus, and therefore, they cannot infect anyone with COVID-19. Vaccinated individuals may experience mild, temporary side effects, but this is an indication of the immune response to the vaccination, not COVID-19.

FACT: For pregnant women, the benefits of getting vaccinated far outweigh the risk of not being immunized.

Pregnant and recently pregnant people are more likely to get severely ill with COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people. Pregnant people with COVID-19 are also at increased risk of preterm birth and might be at increased risk of other adverse pregnancy outcomes compared with pregnant women without COVID-19. Vaccinated individuals who breastfeed can pass down the antibodies from the vaccines to their babies, which gives their children an added layer of protection against the virus.

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Schedule your vaccination appointment on the MyChart portal today. Visit ochsnerlsuhs.org/vaccine for more facts, or call **844-888-2772** with any additional questions. For more COVID-19 information and resources, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov) or the Louisiana Department of Health (ldh.la.gov) website.