

# COVID-19 Vaccine:

## Preconception, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Fact Sheet

If you are thinking about having a baby, if you are pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding you may have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

With additional evidence about COVID-19 vaccination, leading health experts in Canada agree that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and offer pregnant and breastfeeding individuals protection from severe COVID-19 illness.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends that pregnant and breastfeeding individuals complete their primary series with an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty or Moderna Spikevax) and receive a booster dose when eligible. The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) supports vaccination at any stage of pregnancy or while breastfeeding. This is because a COVID-19 infection at any stage in pregnancy can be severe, requiring hospital care and admission to the intensive care unit compared to those who are not pregnant.



### If you are planning to get pregnant:

- Complete your primary series and get a booster dose, when eligible, before becoming pregnant.
- There is currently no evidence of infertility associated with the COVID-19 vaccine.

### Getting the COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant is safe and recommended

- In pregnancy, COVID-19 infection can be serious.
- The COVID-19 vaccine can protect you from serious illness.
- Antibodies produced may provide protection for your baby.
- The COVID-19 vaccine is safe during pregnancy and is being used around the world.
- Talk to your health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

## Severe COVID-19 illness in pregnancy can cause complications such as:

- Preterm birth
- Neonatal complications
- Fetal distress



\*The risk of these complications increases for pregnant individuals who are over 35 years of age or have pre-existing conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, or obesity.

The antibodies that mRNA vaccines produce in pregnant individuals are comparable to those produced in non-pregnant individuals. These antibodies transfer across the placenta, providing protection to the baby.

### **I am concerned that I may not be able to become pregnant if I take the COVID-19 vaccine.**

There is no current evidence that connects the COVID-19 vaccine to infertility.

### **I am pregnant and I am worried about having a miscarriage if I get the COVID-19 vaccine.**

There is no current evidence that connects the COVID-19 vaccine to miscarriages during pregnancy.

### **I am breastfeeding, is it safe for me to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe for individuals who are breastfeeding. The vaccine helps protect you from getting COVID-19 and passing it to your child.

The COVID-19 vaccine does not pass through breastmilk; mRNA vaccines do not contain live viruses and are not passed through your breastmilk.

Antibodies produced by you after the COVID-19 vaccine, pass through your breastmilk to your child which may protect your child from COVID-19.

**For more information on making your decision, contact your health care provider to make the choice that is right for you and your family.**

### **Information from:**

1. Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC): <https://sogc.org/>
2. World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub>
3. Health Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/pregnancy-childbirth-newborn.html>
4. Ontario: [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19\\_vaccination\\_pregnancy\\_decision\\_making\\_support\\_tool.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19_vaccination_pregnancy_decision_making_support_tool.pdf)
5. Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health: [https://www.pcmch.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/PCMCH-Maternal-Neonatal-COVID-19-General-Guideline\\_22July2021-1.pdf](https://www.pcmch.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/PCMCH-Maternal-Neonatal-COVID-19-General-Guideline_22July2021-1.pdf)