

# Vaccines and Pregnancy

Pregnancy is an ideal time to get vaccinated against certain diseases. Some vaccines are not only safe to receive during pregnancy, but are also strongly recommended by public health professionals. When you receive a vaccine during pregnancy, your body produces antibodies that fight the disease you were vaccinated against. These antibodies cross over the placenta (the organ in your womb that nourishes your unborn baby) and protect your baby in the first months of life. See the tables below to learn about the vaccines you may need during your pregnancy.

**Be a  
SUPERMOM**

*Vaccines are SAFE, and knowing the best time to get them can keep you and your baby protected*



Illustrations by Abby Hellstrom

<b>Safe and Recommended FOR ALL</b>	<b>About the Vaccine</b>
Influenza, inactivated vaccine (flu shot)	All women who are pregnant should be vaccinated against the flu. During pregnancy, women are more prone to severe or life-threatening illness if they get the flu. If you get the flu while you are pregnant, you have a greater chance for serious problems for your unborn baby, including premature labor and delivery. If you are vaccinated during pregnancy, you decrease your baby's risk of getting the flu for up to 6 months after birth. Babies should receive the flu vaccine yearly starting at 6 months of age. The flu shot can be given at any time during pregnancy.
Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap)	All women who are pregnant should be vaccinated against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. These vaccines are given together in a single injection known as "Tdap." Pertussis (whooping cough) is a very serious bacterial infection that is on the rise and very deadly to newborns. Getting vaccinated in pregnancy can help protect your baby from birth until his or her first vaccine at 2 months of age. A woman should be vaccinated in each pregnancy to give her baby the best protection. Tdap can be given at any time during pregnancy, but is preferred at 27-36 weeks.

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<b><i>Safe and Recommended FOR SOME</i></b>	<b><i>About the Vaccine</i></b>
Hepatitis A	Hepatitis A vaccine is safe during pregnancy and can be given if you are at risk of infection. Factors that put you at risk for Hepatitis A include history of chronic liver disease, IV drug use, sexual partner with Hepatitis A, travel to an area where Hepatitis A is common, or exposure to unsanitary living conditions or unsafe water. The vaccine is given in 2 doses, 6 months apart.
Hepatitis B	Hepatitis B vaccine is safe during pregnancy and can be given if you have diabetes, have had more than one sex partner in the last 6 months or recently had a sexually transmitted infection, are on dialysis, have an immune dysfunction, or are not already immune. A blood test can show if you are immune already and don't need the vaccine. The vaccine is given in 3 doses over a 6 month period. It is recommended that your baby be vaccinated at birth.

For more information on vaccines in pregnancy, see  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html>

<b><i>Not Safe during Pregnancy</i></b>	<b><i>About the Vaccine</i></b>
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	The HPV vaccine is not recommended during pregnancy. There are currently no clinical studies that show it to be safe or harmful during pregnancy.
Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)	If a woman becomes infected with rubella during pregnancy, her baby can have serious birth defects. Women who are pregnant should be tested to see if they are immune to rubella, but should not receive the vaccine until after the baby is born.
Varicella (chicken pox)	Women who have had chicken pox or who have had the vaccine may be protected against chicken pox; however, they should be tested during pregnancy to confirm that they are immune. Varicella vaccine is not recommended in pregnancy, but may be given after the baby is born.
Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (nasal spray)	Pregnant women should not get live vaccines.

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If you will be traveling outside the United States, you may need additional vaccines. For information, consult your midwife, a travel clinic, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel).

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- American College of Nurse-Midwives  
<http://ourmomentoftruth.midwife.org/OMOT-Vaccines-for-Women>
- <http://www.immunizationforwomen.org>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html>
- <http://www.marchofdimes.com/pregnancy/vaccinations-during-pregnancy.aspx>

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