

Pregnant women need a flu shot

Getting the flu can cause serious problems when you are pregnant. Read on to learn about the dangers of the flu, the safety of the flu shot for pregnant women, and how the flu shot protects you and your baby. You'll also find information about what to do if you get the flu while pregnant.



You can protect yourself and your baby by getting a flu shot during your pregnancy.

Getting sick with flu while pregnant can cause:



Hospitalization or even death from flu

If you get the flu, you could become sick enough that you would need to be hospitalized, or you could even die.



Premature labor and delivery

Premature labor and delivery can be life-threatening to your baby.



Birth defects or other problems for your baby

Having a fever from flu (or from any other infection) in the early weeks of pregnancy is dangerous for your unborn baby.

Frequently asked questions about the flu shot

Will the flu shot hurt my unborn baby?

Millions of flu shots have been given to pregnant women over many years. Flu shots have not been shown to cause harm to pregnant women or their babies.

How does the flu shot protect me?

When you get your flu shot, your body starts to make antibodies that help protect you against the flu.

Does the flu shot protect my baby?

Yes. Antibodies can be passed on to your unborn baby, and help protect the baby for up to six months after birth.

Because an infant under six months of age is too young to get a flu vaccine, it is very important that you get a flu shot while pregnant.

How long does it take for the flu shot to begin protecting me and my unborn baby?

It takes about 2 weeks for antibodies to be made after getting the flu shot.

Will the flu shot give me the flu?

No, but sometimes the flu shot can give you side effects. The most common ones are mild, such as soreness, tenderness, redness, or swelling at the spot where you had the shot.

Sometimes people have headache, muscle ache at the spot where the shot was given, fever, and nausea, or feel tired after getting the flu shot.

FLU SHOTS AND PREGNANT WOMEN



Talk to your doctor or nurse right away if you have flu symptoms.

Frequently asked questions about the flu

Do I need to worry about catching the flu if I'm healthy and rarely get sick?

Just because you don't seem to catch illnesses, that doesn't mean you won't catch the flu.

And if you catch the flu when you are pregnant, you are at risk of serious problems. Changes in the immune system, heart, and lungs during pregnancy make pregnant women more likely to get severe illness caused by the flu.

What symptoms should I watch for?

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headache
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Body aches

What should I do if I'm having any of these symptoms?

- Call your doctor, nurse, or clinic right away.
 - » A doctor can prescribe medicine to treat the flu. The medicine can protect you from the risk of getting seriously ill. These medicines must be started as soon as possible.

You can bring down your fever with acetaminophen such as Tylenol™. But you should still call your doctor or nurse right away, even if you bring your fever down.

Can flu be so serious that I would need to call 911?

Yes! If you have any of the following signs, call 911:

- Problems breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in your chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe or constant vomiting
- High fever that is not responding to acetaminophen such as Tylenol™.

And call 911 if you notice that your baby is not moving as much or is no longer moving at all.



Flu can be serious. If you experience severe symptoms, don't wait to see if problems go away on their own. Call your healthcare professional, or call 911 if you think it's an emergency.

Early treatment is important for pregnant women

If you get sick with flu-like symptoms call your doctor right away. If needed, the doctor will prescribe an antiviral medicine that treats the flu. Antiviral drugs can reduce the time you are sick with flu, help make flu illness milder, and can reduce flu-related complications.

For more information, visit: <http://www.address> or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).