



## **FAQs for the website from Q and A on 20 May 2021**

### **Can having the vaccine affect my fertility now or in the future?**

There is no link between the COVID-19 vaccines and fertility. The recorded levels of 'accidental' pregnancy for those who have had the vaccine and those who have not are similar. There is no biologically plausible mechanism by which current vaccines would cause any impact on women's fertility.

### **Is the vaccine safe in pregnancy/what data do we have?**

COVID-19 vaccines offer pregnant women the best protection against COVID-19 disease which can be serious in later pregnancy for some women. There is less data available for the COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy as the virus is relatively new. However, we do have real-world data from the United States where around 100,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated mainly with mRNA vaccines, such as Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna these cases have not raised any safety concerns.

### **Have there been any recorded side effects for pregnant women or babies?**

The data we have so far shows there is no more risk to mother and baby from having the vaccine. There have been no increase in birth defects or miscarriage recorded from those who have had the COVID-19 vaccine. There is however a small risk of complications from contracting covid-19 while pregnant.

### **What long term impact will there be on the child?**

We do not have long term data as the vaccine is new, but the vaccine works in a similar way to other vaccines and there have not been long term effects from those.

### **When is the right time to have the vaccine when I am pregnant?**

Many people choose to have the vaccine after the 12 week period, as during this time the baby is developing. It would be good to consider having the vaccine earlier, to reduce the chances of getting COVID-19 in the later stages of pregnancy. This is a personal decision and should be considered on a case by case basis, please speak to your healthcare team to assess the options based on your personal medical history.

### **Will I automatically be offered the vaccine if I am pregnant?**

No, being pregnant does not automatically put you into the high priority groups, you will be offered the vaccine based on age, or if you are classed as higher risk due to other medical factors. However once your age group has been offered the vaccine,

you can tick the 'pregnant' option on the [NHS national booking website](#), this will then class you as a higher priority within your age group.

**We have had some feedback that this option is not available** - this is a newer addition to the system and as such would not have been available initially. It is available when you book your first vaccine and appears as below.



The screenshot shows the NHS 'Book a coronavirus vaccination' interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the NHS logo and the text 'Book a coronavirus vaccination'. Below the header, there is a link to 'Go back'. The main question is 'Are you pregnant?'. Underneath the question, there is a link to 'Why are we asking this?'. There are three radio button options: 'Yes, I am pregnant', 'I think I might be pregnant', and 'No, I am not pregnant'. At the bottom of the form, there is a green 'Continue' button.

### **I have had the first dose before I was pregnant, should I get my second dose?**

All individual cases should be discussed with your healthcare team but in general yes. You will get more immunity from 2nd vaccination, so you should go ahead with your second vaccine.

### **Should I have the vaccine if I have had complications in pregnancy?**

Please speak to your medical healthcare team, but in general yes. Pregnancy complications are more likely to occur if you catch covid, and there is no evidence that the vaccine will increase complications.

### **Which vaccine will I be offered?**

Anyone under 40 will be offered Pfizer or Moderna and most pregnant women, regardless of age are likely to be offered one of these, unless there is a reason to be offered a specific vaccine. Please speak to your GP about this if you have concerns.

### **Should I take the vaccine if I plan to have IVF?**

The vaccine does not interfere with IVF treatment. Please speak to your GP and the IVF team who will know more about your medical history if you are planning IVF.

**Why should pregnant women have the vaccine?**

The vaccine is our best defence against the virus. There are slightly increased risks in later pregnancy if you catch COVID-19 so the vaccine would protect you. It is a personal choice that should be made in consultation with your medical team.

**Should I stop Breastfeeding if I have the vaccine?**

Although there is a lack of data for these specific vaccinations in breastfeeding, there is no plausible mechanism by which any vaccine ingredient could pass to your baby through breast milk. You should therefore not stop breastfeeding in order to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

**Should I wait until I give birth to take the vaccine?**

Please speak to your healthcare team, there are slightly increased risks in later pregnancy if you catch COVID-19 so the vaccine would protect you. It is a personal choice that should be made in consultation with your medical team.

**I am pregnant and on immune suppressants, should I avoid the vaccine?**

This is a discussion you should have with your healthcare team. If you are on immunosuppressants you are likely to be classed as higher risk and as such should consider taking the vaccine unless specifically advised not to by your specialist healthcare professional.

**Are pregnant women at higher risk of serious illness if they catch COVID 19?**

Although it's very rare for pregnant women to become seriously ill if they get COVID-19, it may be more likely later in pregnancy. If this happens, there's a small chance your baby may be born early or you may be advised to give birth earlier than your due date.

It's important to follow social distancing advice throughout your pregnancy and especially when you're more than 28 weeks pregnant (in your 3rd trimester). Speak to your healthcare team about vaccine options.