

# Why You Should Get The COVID-19 Vaccine If You Are Pregnant

## Frequently Asked Questions with Sources



Queen's University Initiative. Infographic by Iku Nwosu, Medical Student. Reviewed by OBGYNs: Dr. Olga Bougie, MD, MPH, FRCSC; Dr. Graeme Smith, MD, PhD, FRCSC; Dr. Laura Gaudet, MD, MSc, FRCSC. Graphic edits by Stephanie Jiang, Medical Student.

The MoTHERS Program

**"Why are doctors becoming more concerned about pregnant people contracting COVID-19?"**

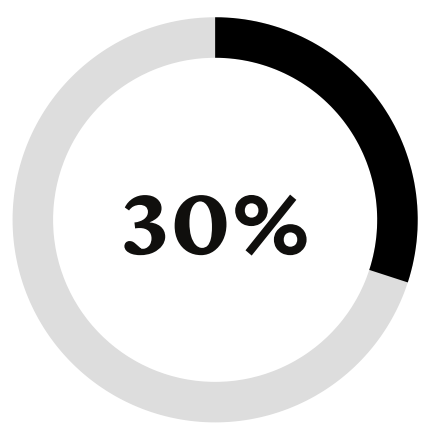
In Canada and across the world, the burden of the pandemic has rapidly increased due to the highly infectious variants.

An increasing number of pregnant patients infected with COVID-19 are being admitted to **intensive care units (ICU)**.

### **ICU care is for a hospital's sickest patients.**

It entails life-sustaining measures including intubation, ventilation, oxygen, medications that maintain blood pressure, and extensive monitoring by teams of health care professionals.

While most people from the general population with COVID-19 experience mild illness, **otherwise healthy pregnant patients with COVID-19 are getting very sick, very quickly.**



**As of April 20, 2021, 30% of Sinai Health ICU patients were pregnant or postpartum patients.**  
(Dr. Wendy Whittle, Sinai Health)

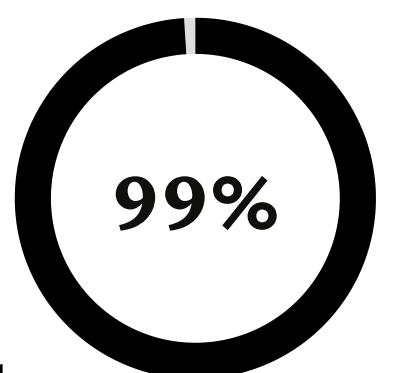
In cases of severe illness, **emergency C-sections** are being performed in the ICU for both maternal and fetal safety.

**"COVID-19 is usually a mild illness, and I have a healthy pregnancy. Why should I be vaccinated?"**

**"The vaccine has risks. How much do we even know about it? I have enough going on with my pregnancy as it is."**

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) supports the use of **all available COVID-19 vaccines approved in Canada** in any trimester of pregnancy and during breastfeeding in accordance with regional eligibility.

**No clots in > 99% of vaccine recipients.**



Arterial and venous thrombosis associated with low platelets events following the adenovirus vector COVID-19 vaccines (AstraZeneca, COVISHIELD, Janssen) occur in as few as 1 in every 125,000 to 1 in 1 million people.

**Preliminary findings do not show obvious safety concerns among pregnant persons who received vaccination.**

## The vaccine has now been shown to:

- 1) Increase maternal vaccine-specific IgG antibodies. These can get across to **help protect baby** after delivery as long as you get the vaccine at least 3 weeks before delivery.
- 2) Increase vaccine-specific IgA antibodies which in **breast milk provides mucosal protection from COVID19 for your baby.**

**There are other vaccines recommended in pregnancy for similar reasons.** These include: Influenza, Tdap (*Whooping cough*), and more.

**"Are there any benefits from the vaccine to my baby?"**



## The Bottom Line

Every medical decision should be made after weighing the risks and benefits for yourself with the input of a medical professional.

However, with widespread community transmission of the virus variants, understand that **the risk of getting very sick with COVID19 is peaking.**

# GET VACCINATED.

Take the first vaccine you are offered.  
**Especially if you are pregnant.**

### Sources

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2. Toronto critical care doctors are sounding the alarm on the mounting number of pregnant COVID-19 patients in their intensive care units: [https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/video?cid=sm%3Atrueanthe%3Actvtoronto%3Atwitterpost&clipId=2184430&taid=607e66dbc18bb900010d31bf&utm\\_campaign=trueAnthem%3A+Trending+Content&utm\\_medium=trueAnthem&utm\\_source=facebook](https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/video?cid=sm%3Atrueanthe%3Actvtoronto%3Atwitterpost&clipId=2184430&taid=607e66dbc18bb900010d31bf&utm_campaign=trueAnthem%3A+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=facebook)
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4. SOGC Statement on the COVID-19 vaccines and rare adverse outcomes of thrombosis associated with low platelets: [https://sogc.org/en/content/featured-news/SOGC\\_Statement\\_on\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_vaccines\\_and\\_rare\\_adverse\\_outcomes\\_of\\_%20thrombosis.aspx](https://sogc.org/en/content/featured-news/SOGC_Statement_on_the_COVID-19_vaccines_and_rare_adverse_outcomes_of_%20thrombosis.aspx)
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6. New England Journal of Medicine - Preliminary Findings of mRNA Covid-19 Vaccine Safety in Pregnant Persons: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2104983>
7. CDC - Information about COVID-19 Vaccines for People who Are Pregnant or Breastfeeding: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/pregnancy.html>
8. Vaccination and pregnancy: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/vaccination-pregnancy.html>