

# Vaccines and Pregnancy

Getting Vaccinated While Pregnant Protects  
Both Mom and Baby



Talk to your doctor or midwife about flu and whooping cough vaccines, and to find out what other vaccines you may need.

For more information about vaccines during pregnancy and the importance of timely immunizations for people of all ages, visit [VaccinateYourFamily.org](http://VaccinateYourFamily.org)



## Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Whooping cough, also known as pertussis, is a serious disease, especially in infants. Some babies with whooping cough have coughing fits and gasp for air, while others may stop breathing. About half of babies younger than 12 months who get whooping cough are hospitalized. The good news is that you can help protect your baby. **By getting the whooping cough vaccine (also called Tdap) during pregnancy, you'll pass antibodies to your baby that will help protect your newborn from this disease from the time he or she is born until your baby gets his first whooping cough vaccination at 2 months of age.** Doctors and midwives who specialize in taking care of pregnant women agree that the **whooping cough vaccine is safe for mom and baby, and is important for women to get during the 27th through 36th week (3rd trimester) of each pregnancy.**

## Influenza (Flu)

The flu can be a dangerous illness, especially for pregnant women and young children. Changes in your immune, heart and lung functions during pregnancy make you more likely to get seriously ill from the flu. Pregnant women with the flu also have a greater chance for serious problems for their unborn baby, including premature labor and delivery. **Fortunately, getting a flu shot is a simple thing you can do to help protect yourself and your baby.** When you get a flu shot, your body makes antibodies that can be passed on to your unborn child to help protect him or her from the flu for up to 6 months after he is born. This is important because your newborn is at high risk of severe flu complications, but can not get his own flu vaccine until 6 months of age. Sadly, every year, about 20,000 children under five are hospitalized and approximately 100 die due to complications from the flu. **The flu vaccine is safe for both mom and baby, and can be received during any trimester. The CDC recommends getting the vaccine as soon as it becomes available during flu season.**

## Surround Your Baby with Protection

For additional protection, make sure friends, family and caregivers who will be in contact with your baby are up-to-date on their vaccinations at least two weeks before meeting your newborn.