



Study: COVID hospitalizations lower among infants whose mothers were vaccinated during pregnancy

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Editor's note: For the latest news on COVID-19, visit <http://bit.ly/AAPNewsCOVID19>.

Infants whose mothers were vaccinated against COVID-19 during pregnancy were 61% less likely to be hospitalized with the virus than those whose mothers were not vaccinated while pregnant, according to a new study.

“I cannot emphasize enough how today’s findings reinforce the importance of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy both to protect the people who are pregnant and to help protect their babies,” said Dana Meaney-Delman, M.D., M.P.H., FACOG, chief of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) Infant Outcomes Monitoring Research and Prevention Branch.

Previous studies have found evidence that mothers pass SARS-CoV-2 antibodies to their babies through the placenta, but it was unclear how much protection they provided. In a new study published today in the CDC’s *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, researchers gathered data from 20 pediatric hospitals from July 2021 to mid-January 2022. They looked at 176 infants under 6 months who were hospitalized with COVID-19 and compared them to 203 infants hospitalized without COVID-19. The two groups had similar prevalence of underlying conditions and prematurity, although infants with COVID-19 were more commonly Black or Hispanic than the control group.

The data showed two doses of mRNA vaccine during pregnancy was 61% effective in preventing infant hospitalization due to COVID. About 84% of infants hospitalized for COVID and 88% with COVID who were

treated in the intensive care unit were born to mothers who were not vaccinated during pregnancy. One infant with COVID died after being born to an unvaccinated mother. The study did not look at women vaccinated before pregnancy.

COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy has been shown to be safe for mothers and their babies. The CDC recommends vaccination for women who are pregnant, may become pregnant or who are breastfeeding. While vaccine efficacy in today's study was higher when vaccination occurred after 20 weeks of pregnancy, confidence intervals were wide, and the CDC is not recommending specific timing for vaccination during pregnancy.

Contracting COVID-19 during pregnancy has been linked to severe illness and death in pregnant women and preterm birth and stillbirth among their babies. At least 171,428 pregnant women have contracted COVID-19 and 273 have died, [CDC data show](#).

About 42% of pregnant women were fully vaccinated before or during pregnancy as of Jan. 15, [according to the CDC](#).

Resources

- [AAP COVID vaccination resources](#)
- [CDC clinical considerations for administering COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [AAP News story "COVID during pregnancy: Studies underscore urgency of prevention strategies"](#)
- [AAP News story "Preliminary data show no safety concerns for pregnant women receiving COVID-19 vaccines"](#)