

COVID-19 IN PREGNANCY CAN PUT YOU AT HIGHER RISK

DISCUSS VACCINATION WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER — BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER PREGNANCY

Pregnancy can come with a lot of questions about what's best for your health and your future baby. The COVID-19 pandemic adds additional challenges to an already potentially stressful time.

If you are pregnant, intend to become pregnant or are postpartum, York Region Public Health recommends you discuss vaccination against COVID-19 with your health care provider or specialist. Together, you should consider your personal risk of exposure to COVID-19, the risks of severe COVID-19 during pregnancy, possible side effects and the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination.

COVID-19 vaccines are recommended during pregnancy and breastfeeding

The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain live virus and cannot cause a COVID-19 infection. There is increasing evidence available to support the safety of COVID-19 vaccines during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) recommends all individuals who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant should receive the COVID-19 vaccination. The SOGC also recommends vaccination at any point during pregnancy and/or during breastfeeding.

COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy continues to be monitored in Ontario. [Better Outcomes Registry & Network \(BORN\) Ontario](#) reports that as of June 30, 2021, almost 40,000 pregnant people in Ontario received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine between December 2020 and June 2021. Preliminary data indicates there is no increased risk during pregnancy from COVID-19 vaccination.

We **strongly recommend** any partner and family members of the pregnant individual get vaccinated as well, to reduce the chances of exposure to COVID-19.

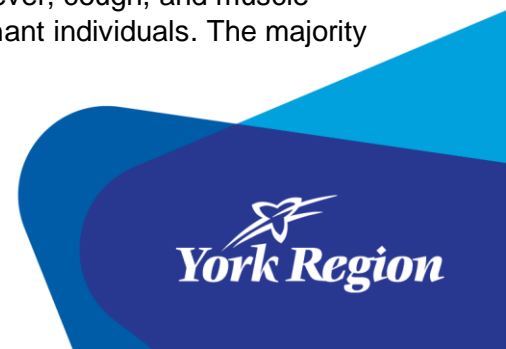
Protection against COVID-19 for the -pregnant individual may also help protect the newborn infant as well. The antibodies that a pregnant individual makes from the vaccine likely pass to the baby and may help keep the baby safe after birth.

If you are planning to get pregnant, you can complete your two-dose vaccine series before or during your pregnancy. There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility in any way.

COVID-19 infection during pregnancy

In most pregnant individuals, COVID-19 causes mild symptoms such as fever, cough, and muscle aches that will get better by themselves, similar to symptoms in non-pregnant individuals. The majority of babies born to patients with COVID-19 are healthy and full term.

However, compared to non-pregnant individuals, pregnant individuals who have COVID-19 have a **higher risk of severity**.



[The Ontario Science Table reports](#) approximately **7% to 15%** of pregnant individuals infected with COVID-19 will experience moderate to severe disease and require hospitalization. Canadian and international data suggest pregnant individuals with COVID-19 infection have a **higher risk of intensive care unit (ICU) admission and need for mechanical ventilation.**

In Spring 2021, during the third wave of COVID-19 in Ontario, many otherwise healthy pregnant patients that contracted COVID-19 became very sick, very quickly. On April 20, 2021, near the peak of the third wave, 30% of all ICU patients at Sinai Health in the City of Toronto were pregnant or postpartum.

The risk of complications or severity from COVID-19 during pregnancy or postpartum far outweigh any potential risk from COVID-19 vaccination.

York Region Public Health Cares

Visit york.ca/COVID19 for the latest information on COVID-19 in York Region. You can also visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine for information on vaccination, including where to locate a clinic to receive your shot. Walk-ins are accepted at all York Region Public Health clinics; you can receive a COVID-19 vaccine today.

You can also call our Health Connection line at **1-800-361-5653** or [chat online](#) with a **Public Health Nurse** with any questions about pregnancy, breastfeeding or infant feeding, mental health or COVID-19

Additional Resources

York Region Public Health – [Becoming a parent during COVID-19](#)

Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) – [Vaccination in Pregnancy FAQ for health care providers](#)

Ontario Midwives – [COVID-19 Clinical FAQ](#)

[Better Outcomes Registry and Network \(BORN\) Ontario](#)

Health Canada – [COVID-19: Pregnancy, childbirth and caring for a newborn](#)

Ontario Ministry of Health – [COVID-19 Vaccination Special Populations: Vaccinations in Pregnancy & Breastfeeding Decision-Making Support Tool](#)