

INFLUENZA CAN BE A SERIOUS ILLNESS FOR YOU AND YOUR UNBORN BABY

GET VACCINATED

Influenza can be a serious illness when you are pregnant.

Compared to other healthy adults, pregnant women have an increased risk of severe complications and hospital admission due to influenza. This is because temporary changes to the immune system, heart and lungs increase susceptibility to more serious diseases.

Influenza can also be a serious illness for new born babies, as their immune systems are not fully developed, making it harder for them to fight off infection. Influenza during pregnancy can also cause premature birth or low birth weight in the new-born.

What is influenza?

Influenza is a contagious disease that spreads from person to person, mainly through coughing, sneezing and close contact. Influenza epidemics usually occur in winter. Influenza symptoms appear suddenly and can last from a few days to two weeks.

Common symptoms include fever, coughing, body aches and headache. Most people recover quickly, but sometimes influenza can cause serious complications such as pneumonia and bronchitis, or even death.

Seasonal influenza vaccination during pregnancy is the best choice for mother and baby.

Seasonal influenza vaccination is safe at all stages of pregnancy. For many years, pregnant women around the world have received millions of doses of seasonal influenza vaccine, and the vaccine is safe during pregnancy.

Once you have been vaccinated, you pass on your immunity to your baby, protecting him or her for the first six months of life. This is important because children under six months of age are too young to be vaccinated.

Common side effects of influenza vaccination include redness and pain at the vaccination site. Some people experience headache, muscle pain, fever, tiredness and nausea. Unlike influenza, these side effects are mild and pass quickly.

If you have flu symptoms during pregnancy.

Getting the influenza vaccine will reduce your risk of getting sick during pregnancy and help protect your new-born. However, as no vaccine gives 100% protection, it is essential to contact your doctor or midwife if you develop influenza-like symptoms, even if you have already been vaccinated.

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Vaccination is safe

www.euro.who.int/en/fluaware