



Guidelines for Dialogue

# VACCINATION DURING PREGNANCY

Material for health workers

**PAHO**

Pan American  
Health  
Organization

World Health  
Organization  
Regional Office for the Americas





This material provides recommended responses for addressing different COVID-19 topics during vaccination campaigns and informational activities, whether at the health facility or during home visits.

The information published in these guidelines is based on data available through September 2022. Knowledge about the virus, the disease, and vaccination is constantly being updated and recommendations may change.

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# Why should pregnant people be vaccinated?

RESPONSE OPTIONS

1

Pregnant people undergo immune system changes that sometimes make them more susceptible to different types of infections such as COVID-19.

2

People who are pregnant are **more likely to become seriously ill**, require longer hospitalization in intensive care or with mechanical breathing assistance, and even die, than non-pregnant people of the same age and ethnicity.



3

Vaccination during pregnancy could help protect babies from COVID-19.

4

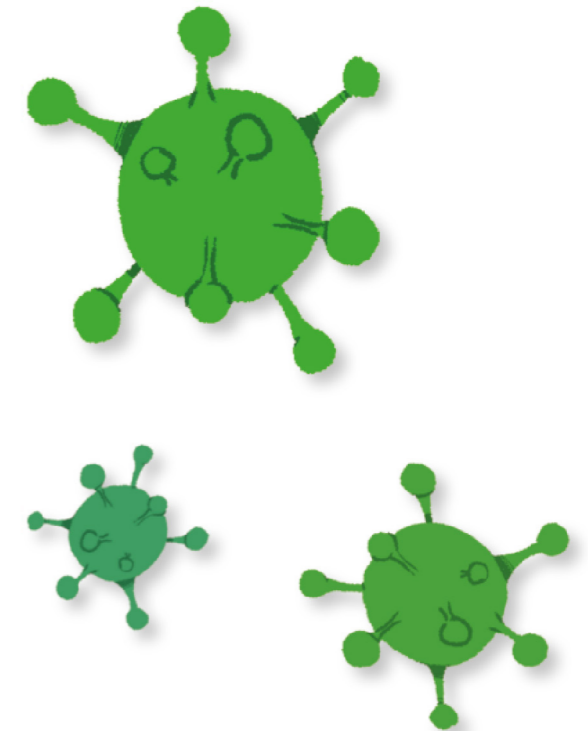
People who contract COVID-19 during pregnancy are **more likely to experience complications** than those who do not.

5

Pregnant people with COVID-19 are at **increased risk of their baby being born early or requiring intensive care.**

6

Pregnant people over 35 years of age or those who have a high body mass index, are overweight, or have a chronic disease such as diabetes or hypertension are at **greater risk of developing severe forms of COVID-19.**



# When can a pregnant person be vaccinated?

RESPONSE OPTIONS

1

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) recommends that **all pregnant people be prioritized for vaccination against COVID-19** when the benefit outweighs the potential risks.

2

PAHO recommends that they receive the vaccine **after the first trimester**, that is, after 13 weeks.



3

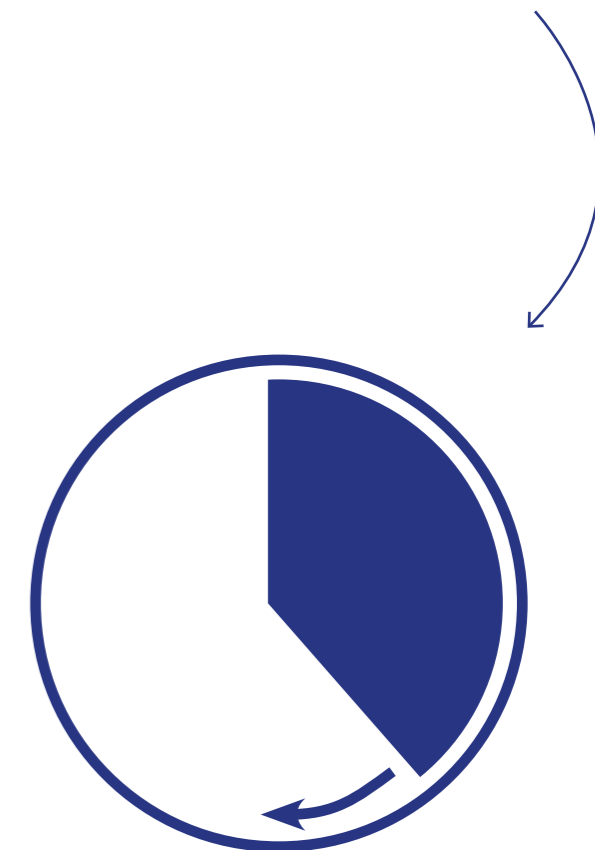
In addition, WHO recommends vaccination during the breastfeeding period and the continuation of breastfeeding after vaccination.

5

If a person gets vaccinated against COVID-19 without knowing they were pregnant, they can complete their schedule without any problems.

4

It is also **recommended that people who are trying to become pregnant be vaccinated**. It is advisable to make sure they are not yet pregnant. If they are, they should be vaccinated from the second trimester of pregnancy onward.



From the second trimester of pregnancy onward.

# This is an important period. Is getting vaccinated a healthy practice during pregnancy?

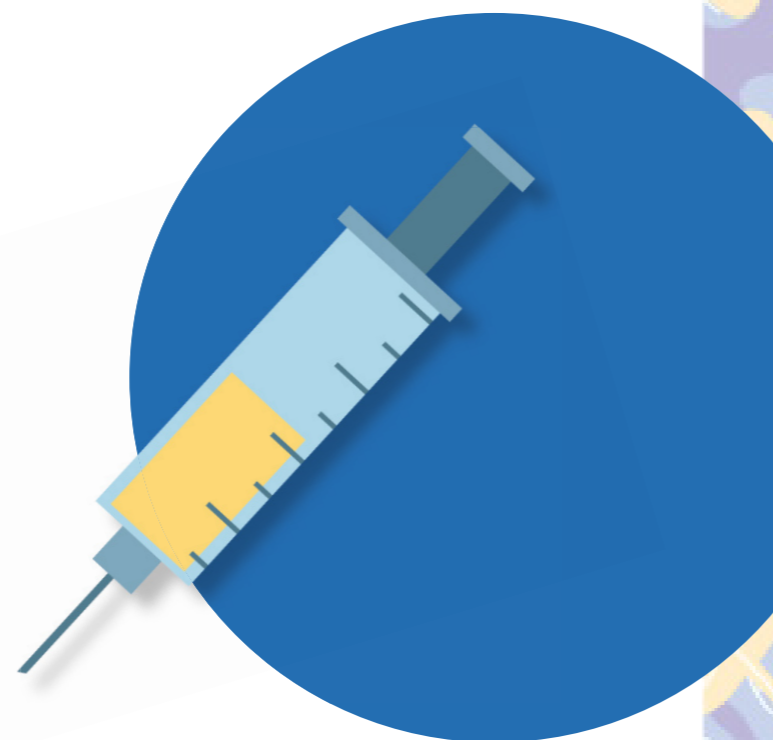
RESPONSE OPTIONS

1

Because pregnant and breastfeeding people experience immune system changes that sometimes make them more susceptible to different types of infections, **being vaccinated helps protect them** from COVID-19 and **helps protect their babies**.

2

All recommended vaccinations should be administered during pregnancy according to the recommendations, guidelines, or national standards in effect where you live (such as flu or influenza; Tdap or Td, which prevents whooping cough, and COVID-19).



## Recommendations:

- Focus on healthy pregnancy and subtly address the subject of vaccination.
- Support the argument by mentioning that there are other vaccines indicated during pregnancy, a fact that may lead to greater acceptance of COVID-19 vaccination.
- The person should keep all follow-up appointments and consult their health care provider if they have fever, cough, or general malaise.
- They should also go to the emergency room if they have bleeding, severe headache, severe nausea and vomiting, or difficulty breathing.

# What COVID-19 prevention measures should be taken during pregnancy?

RESPONSE OPTIONS



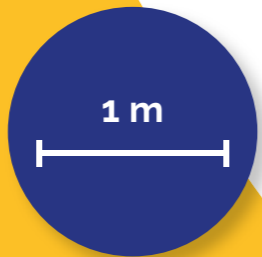
Get vaccinated as soon as possible.



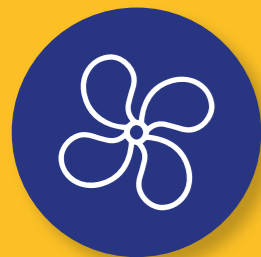
Wash your hands frequently.



Wear a mask.



When possible, keep a safe distance from other people when indoors.



Avoid crowded or poorly ventilated areas.

# Can I get vaccinated if I am breastfeeding?

RESPONSE OPTIONS

1

Yes. It is safe to get vaccinated.

2

The vaccine does not affect milk quality.

3

Vaccination while breastfeeding may also confer protection against COVID-19 to breastfed infants.

4

PAHO recommends continued breastfeeding after vaccination.



This material has been prepared based on documents from the Ministry of Health of Guatemala and with the support of the PAHO Country Office in Guatemala.



