

February 1, 2022

Evidence shows that those who are, or were recently pregnant, are at higher risk for severe illness and even death from COVID-19. The undersigned are committed to the health and safety of you, your babies and future generations. **We encourage COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant, nursing, were recently pregnant, and those planning a pregnancy.**

Currently, those who are pregnant are among the lowest vaccinated groups nationwide. According to [CDC data](#), only 42.6 percent of pregnant people were fully vaccinated against COVID-19, according to data from Dec. 14, 2020, to Jan. 15, 2022.

How does COVID-19 affect those who are pregnant, fetuses, and newborns?

- [According to the CDC](#), those who are pregnant or were recently pregnant are more likely to get severely ill if infected with COVID-19. Pregnancy increases a person’s risk of severe illness. This is because pregnancy causes changes in the body that make it easier to get severely ill from respiratory viruses, such as COVID-19. Severe illness means a person may need hospitalization, intensive care or a ventilator, and could die.
- COVID-19 infection also increases the risk for preterm birth, stillbirth, and other pregnancy complications, including possible effects from “Long COVID,” a condition not fully understood.

Are COVID-19 vaccines safe for those who are pregnant and their babies?

- Yes. The [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#) recommends COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant or nursing. The vaccines are safe and effective during pregnancy.
- Babies delivered by parents who have received COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy [are at less risk for pre-term birth or small-for-gestational-age](#) compared to the risk in unvaccinated pregnant people.
- Vaccination during pregnancy increases antibodies that may be passed from the mother to the baby, offering additional protection to newborns.
- The COVID-19 vaccines do not lead to infertility.

How is COVID-19 prevented?

- The best way to prevent severe illness is to ensure you are [up-to-date](#) on your COVID-19 vaccines, similar to flu shots or routine childhood vaccinations.
- Continue wearing a mask in indoor public settings when six feet of physical distancing can’t be maintained, and consider wearing a mask outdoors when in sustained close contact with others. N95, KN95, and KF94 masks offer the best protection. Surgical masks provide the next-best protection. Cloth masks should be worn with a disposable surgical mask if possible.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces, stay 6 feet apart from those outside your household, and wash your hands often.

Where can I find trusted and reliable resources on COVID-19 and pregnancy?

CDC and National Resources	Local Pima County Resources
Pregnant and Recently Pregnant People CDC Toolkit for Pregnant People and New Parents Ask An Expert - MotherToBaby	Pima County COVID-19 Vaccine Registration Pima County COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs Pima County COVID-19 Testing Centers Pima County COVID-19 and Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, were recently pregnant, are trying to get pregnant, or nursing, please ask your doctor about the COVID-19 vaccine to protect your health and give your baby the best start possible.

Sincerely,

Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer, Health and Community Services

Theresa Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department

Jessica Leonard, 4th Grade, Butterfield Elementary, Marana Unified School District

Gayle A. Dean, M.D., FACOG, MD, F.A.C.O.G., Genesis Ob/Gyn, Chief of Staff Tucson Medical Center

Kathryn Teyechea, BSN, RN, SCRNP (she/her), Director of Support Services, Tucson Medical Center

Edgar E. Portillo, FNP-BC, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Children's Medical center of Tucson

Erica Laber, M.D., MBA, Pediatrician, Tucson Medical Center

Maricela Marquez, Medical Assistant, OB/GYN & Midwifery care, El Rio

Mayra Jeffery, Community Mental Health & Addiction Program Manager, Pima County Health Department, Mother to a Pandemic Newborn

Jessica Moreno, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology; Banner University Medical Group

Karen Jones, RN, Home Visitor, Nurse-Family Partnership, Pima County Health Department

Rebecca "Becky" Rivera, CNM, Certified Nurse Midwife, MHC Healthcare

Rosa "Rose" Chavarria, Certified Behavioral Health Technician (CBHT), Health Aide Substitute, Amphitheater School District

Lorena Verdugo, Community Health Advisor, El Rio Health Center & the Ventanilla de Salud within the Mexican Consulate

Ada M. Wilkinson-Lee, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor of Mexican American Studies and Co-PI of the Arizona Prevention Research Center, University of Arizona

Jenitza Serrano-Feliciano, MD, FAAFP, Chief Medical Officer, MHC Healthcare

Amber Mathewson, Executive Director, Pima County Public Library

Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, Executive Director, Literacy Connects

Katri Typpo, MD, MPH, University of Arizona, Division Chief of Pediatric Critical Care Medicine

As of Feb. 1, 2022

Check pima.gov/covid19pregnancy for updates to the endorsement letter