

Pregnancy, Periods, & Other Questions about COVID-19 Vaccines

1. Ask Questions & Listen

Many people have questions and fears about COVID-19 vaccines and reproductive health.

The best way to start a conversation about vaccine hesitancy is to ask questions and listen. Be curious about what people tell you and thank them for sharing their thoughts and feelings with you. Making decisions about COVID-19 vaccines and talking about our health can be hard sometimes.

“Can you tell me more about what you’ve heard?”

“What are your thoughts on getting a COVID-19 vaccination?”

“What is your greatest concern about this?”





It's safe
to get
vaxxed!

Keep in mind...

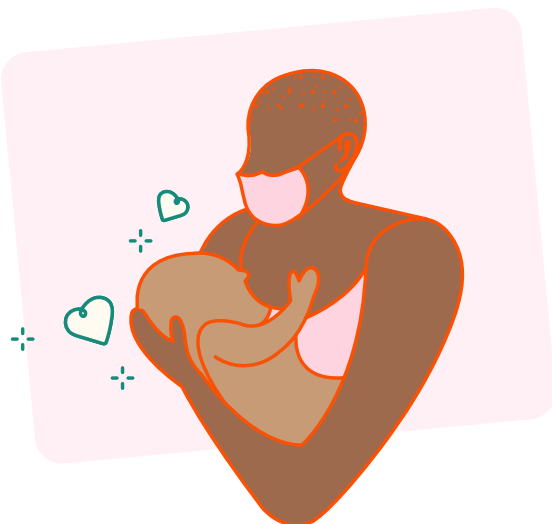
People who are pregnant, thinking of getting pregnant, or breastfeeding should get vaccinated against COVID-19 as it helps to protect both the pregnant person and the baby. You can be vaccinated at any time during pregnancy and breastfeeding.



2. Sharing Information

Pregnancy

People who are pregnant are at increased risk of experiencing a severe case of COVID-19 with serious outcomes for them and their baby, including preterm birth. Research has shown that the vaccines do not have any known serious risks such as miscarriage or possible birth defects.



Breastfeeding/Chestfeeding

There is no need to stop or avoid starting breastfeeding* if you get a COVID-19 vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines help your body produce antibodies that protect you from getting sick if you are exposed to COVID-19. These protective antibodies are transferred into breast milk and can help protect breastfed babies from infection.

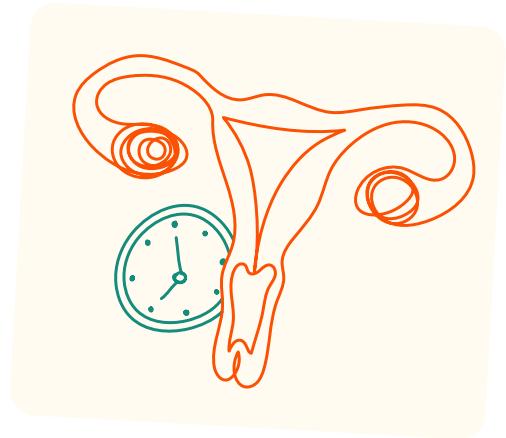
*Some people might prefer the term chestfeeding or nursing instead of breastfeeding.

Periods

Some people have reported that their periods were heavier or longer after getting vaccinated. They also said that their cycle returned to normal the following month. However, it is important to know that a number of factors can impact the menstrual cycle, including sleep, stress, infection, diet and exercise.

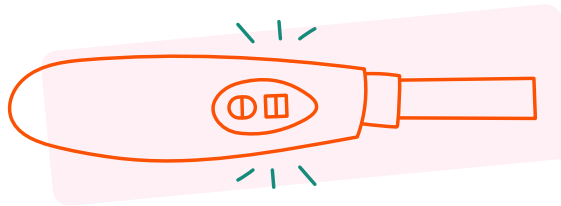
In fact, getting COVID-19 itself may impact the menstrual cycle as about 1/3 of people noticed changes in their periods after getting COVID-19.

Roughly 1/3 of people noticed changes in their periods after getting COVID-19



Fertility

Research shows no impact of COVID-19 vaccines on female or male fertility.



3. Providing Reassurance & Support

Depending on what people's concerns are, you can help them make a decision about getting vaccinated in different ways.



Talk about how vaccines are a routine part of prenatal care

Many people have received vaccines as children or have received other vaccines during pregnancy or while breastfeeding*. Other vaccines that are safely given during pregnancy or while breastfeeding include tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis and influenza vaccines.



Look at the evidence together

Research on COVID-19 vaccines continues to take place around the world and is always growing. Research shows that COVID-19 vaccines are safe for pregnant people both in clinical trials and in "real world" studies with pregnant people.



Tell your own story

Talking about your own experiences can sometimes be more helpful than only sharing facts. If you've had similar concerns as the person you are talking to (for example, fear about whether you'll be able to get pregnant in the future), sharing your own experiences can be reassuring and help people clarify what it is they need to know before making a decision.



Share information about passive immunity

Passive immunity is when the benefits of vaccination are shared between a pregnant person and their unborn child or between a breastfeeding person and their baby. Understanding how this works can be reassuring.



Long COVID-19 & gender

"Long COVID" is a phrase used to describe symptoms that some people have weeks or months after having COVID-19. People from all backgrounds can experience long COVID. However, studies from around the world have shown that women have a higher chance of developing long COVID than men. Research suggests that COVID-19 vaccination can help to reduce the chances of getting long COVID.



Women have a higher chance of developing long COVID

For more vaccine confidence resources, visit covid.bcachc.org and atira.bc.ca.