

**INFLUENZA  
CAN BE SERIOUS  
FOR YOU AND YOUR  
UNBORN CHILD  
GET VACCINATED**



## Influenza can be serious when you are pregnant

Pregnant women are at increased risk of serious disease and hospitalization due to influenza compared to other healthy adults. This is because temporary changes to the immune system, heart and lungs, make pregnant women more prone to severe illness.

Influenza can be serious for newborn babies, too, because their immune systems are not fully developed and are therefore less able to fight infections. Finally, influenza during pregnancy may also lead to premature birth or having a low weight baby.

## What is influenza?

Influenza is an infectious disease that spreads from person to person mainly by coughing, sneezing and close contact. Influenza epidemics usually occur in winter. Influenza symptoms begin suddenly and can last from a few days to up to two weeks.

Usual symptoms include fever, cough, body aches and headache. Most people recover quickly, but, sometimes, influenza can cause serious complications, including pneumonia and bronchitis, and even death.

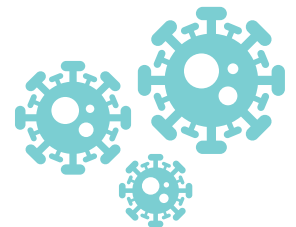
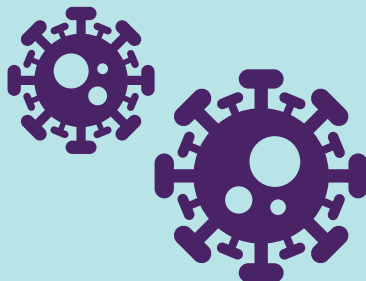


## Seasonal influenza vaccination – the best choice in pregnancy for mother and child

Seasonal influenza vaccination is safe at all stages of pregnancy. Millions of doses of seasonal influenza vaccine have been given to pregnant women all over the world for many years and the vaccine is safe in pregnancy.

Once you have been vaccinated you pass on your immunity to your child, protecting your baby for the first six months of life. This is important because babies under six months are too young to receive the vaccine.

Common side effects of vaccination include soreness and redness at the injection site. Some people experience headache, muscle ache, fever, tiredness and nausea. These side effects are mild and pass quickly compared with influenza.



## **If you have influenza symptoms while pregnant**

Vaccination against influenza will reduce your risk of becoming ill while pregnant and help protect your newborn baby. But because no vaccine is 100% protective, it is important that you 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](http://www.euro.who.int/en/fluaware)