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ACOG and SMFM Recommend COVID-19 Vaccination for Pregnant Individuals

Washington, D.C. – The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), the two leading organizations representing specialists in obstetric care, recommend that all pregnant individuals be vaccinated against COVID-19. The organizations’ recommendations in support of vaccination during pregnancy reflect evidence demonstrating the safe use of the COVID-19 vaccines during pregnancy from tens of thousands of reporting individuals over the last several months, as well as the current low vaccination rates and concerning increase in cases.

Data have shown that COVID-19 infection puts pregnant people at increased risk of severe complications and even death; yet only about 22% of pregnant individuals have received one or more doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In making the strong recommendation in support of vaccination during pregnancy, both national organizations emphasize concerns about significant increases in COVID-19 cases due to the Delta variant and the regional low rates of vaccination in states across the country. Recent data have shown that more than 95% of those who are hospitalized and/or dying from COVID-19 are those who have remained unvaccinated. Pregnant individuals who have decided to wait until after delivery to be vaccinated may be inadvertently exposing themselves to an increased risk of severe illness or death. Those who have recently delivered and were not vaccinated during pregnancy are also strongly encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

“ACOG encourages its members to enthusiastically recommend vaccination to their patients. This means emphasizing the known safety of the vaccines and the increased risk of severe complications associated with COVID-19 infection, including death, during pregnancy,” said J. Martin Tucker, MD, FACOG, president of ACOG. “It is clear that pregnant people need to feel

confident in the decision to choose vaccination, and a strong recommendation from their obstetrician–gynecologist could make a meaningful difference for many pregnant people.”

“COVID-19 vaccination is the best method to reduce maternal and fetal complications of COVID-19 infection among pregnant people,” said William Grobman, MD, MBA, president of SMFM. Maternal-fetal medicine subspecialists—experts in high-risk pregnancy—strongly recommend that pregnant people get vaccinated. Vaccination is safe before, during, or after pregnancy.

“ACOG is recommending vaccination of pregnant individuals because we have evidence of the safe and effective use of the vaccine during pregnancy from many tens of thousands of reporting individuals, because we know that COVID-19 infection puts pregnant people at increased risk of severe complications, and because it is clear from the current vaccination rates that people need to feel confident in the safety and protective value of the COVID-19 vaccines,” added ACOG president Dr. Tucker. “Pregnant individuals should feel confident that choosing COVID-19 vaccination not only protects them but also protects their families and communities.”

Vaccines are our single most effective tool against preventable viruses or diseases, including COVID-19. ACOG and SMFM encourage pregnant individuals to get vaccinated without delay because widespread uptake of the vaccines is the best chance we have to save lives and end this pandemic.

Additional Reading

- ACOG’s Practice Advisory: COVID-19 Vaccination Considerations for Obstetric-Gynecologic Care
- ACOG’s Vaccinating Pregnant Individuals: Eight Key Recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccination Sites
- ACOG’s COVID-19 Vaccines and Pregnancy: Conversation Guide for Clinicians
- SMFM’s Provider Considerations for Engaging in COVID-19 Vaccine Counseling With Pregnant and Lactating Patients
- SMFM’s Covid Vaccination if you are Pregnant or Breastfeeding