

# MATERNAL IMMUNIZATION

— TASK FORCE —



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## Maternal Immunization Task Force and Partners Urge That COVID-19 Vaccine be Available to Pregnant Individuals

All pregnant individuals who choose to receive the COVID-19 vaccine must be allowed to do so in alignment with their state and local vaccination allocation plan. This includes the estimated 330,000 health care workers who are pregnant and should be allowed to receive the vaccine as part of the first phase of vaccine distribution plans. Reports of pregnant individuals being refused vaccination are concerning.

Pregnant individuals who otherwise meet the criteria for COVID-19 vaccines should not be denied the opportunity to be vaccinated, should they choose to do so. Although a conversation with a clinician may be helpful for patients to aid in their decision-making, it should not be required prior to vaccination.

As the COVID-19 vaccine rollout continues, use must reflect the vaccines' federal regulatory authorization as well as information and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and expert healthcare organizations.

Currently, available data demonstrate that pregnant individuals are at increased risk of more severe illness and death due to COVID-19 than their non-pregnant counterparts<sup>1</sup>. Providing pregnant individuals with the opportunity to be vaccinated can be critical to allowing them to protect themselves, particularly if their occupation puts them at increased risk of contracting the virus or they have underlying and comorbid conditions.

When pregnant individuals are excluded from the opportunity to decide whether to be vaccinated, it not only violates their bodily autonomy, it also puts them at risk of severe outcomes and death related to COVID-19 illness. Excluding this critical population at increased risk of severe illness and death related to COVID-19 is unethical.

In the interest of allowing pregnant individuals who would otherwise be considered a priority population for vaccines to make their own decisions regarding their health, our groups strongly recommend pregnant individuals should be free to make their own decision in conjunction with their clinical care team. All pregnant individuals must be supported in their decision about COVID-19 vaccination, whether they choose to receive the vaccine, or they opt to decline.

For more information, please visit ACOG's Practice Advisory on [Vaccinating Pregnant and Lactating Patients Against COVID-19](#) and the CDC's [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States](#).

<sup>1</sup> Zambrano LD, Ellington S, Strid P, et al. Update: Characteristics of Symptomatic Women of Reproductive Age with Laboratory-Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection by Pregnancy Status — United States, January 22–October 3, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1641–1647. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6944e3>