

Pregnant women are at increased risk of severe influenza. Therefore the Norwegian Institute of Public Health recommends that pregnant women in their 2nd and 3rd trimester should take the seasonal influenza vaccine.



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FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

Seasonal influenza vaccine for pregnant women protects mother and child

Increased risk of severe influenza

All women are at equal risk of catching influenza but pregnant women have a greater risk of a more severe disease course with complications. The risk increases with the length of pregnancy. The unborn child is also at risk if the mother becomes seriously ill.

Protects the mother

The vaccine provides equally good protection for pregnant women as other healthy adults. Other viruses and bacteria cause symptoms that resemble influenza but the vaccine will not protect against those.

Protects the child after birth

Infants are at greater risk of severe illness and death from influenza than older children and adults. If the mother is vaccinated during pregnancy, the child will also be protected for the first six months after birth.

Recommendations for pregnant women

- Pregnant women in their 2nd and 3rd trimester should be vaccinated before the influenza season begins.
- Pregnant women in their first trimester should have the vaccine if they belong to any of the other risk groups.

The recommendation applies to the influenza season (autumn and winter).

Contact your doctor for vaccination.

About the influenza vaccine

The seasonal influenza vaccine contains inactivated influenza virus and cannot cause influenza. No mercury compounds or other preservatives are added to the vaccine. The vaccine is given by injection and one dose is sufficient.

Side effects

The seasonal influenza vaccine rarely gives serious side effects and the benefits of vaccination greatly outweigh any potential risk. Common side effects include tenderness at the injection site, feeling slightly unwell and fever. Severe allergic reactions are extremely rare following influenza vaccination.

Does not harm the unborn child

Several countries, including the USA, have recommended the vaccine for pregnant women for many years. These countries report that vaccination during pregnancy does not increase the risk of miscarriage, premature birth or damage to the unborn child.

Do not take the vaccine if you:

- Have an acute infection with fever over 38 °C.
- Have had a severe reaction to a previous dose of the same vaccine.
- Have had a severe and immediate allergic reaction to eggs.
- Have a known allergy to any other ingredient in the vaccine.

More information

More information about influenza and vaccination is available on www.fhi.no/influensa and www.fhi.no/vaksine.