



Technical Taskforce of Corona in pregnancy  
Lebanon



## Questions and Answers on **COVID-19** vaccine in **pregnancy** and **lactation**

The National Taskforce Committee of Corona in Pregnancy (NTCCP) has developed a collection of questions and answers from different references to guide you on advising and counselling your pregnant women on COVID-19 vaccination. Feel free to disseminate among your colleagues, patients and community



REPUBLIC OF LEBANON  
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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For your queries contact Dr Faysal EL Kak NTCCP president :  
fk01@aub.edu.lb / lsog1958@gmail.com



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## **Section I. General Questions**

### **How to get the vaccine?**

Registration on MOPH platform, or depending on the recommendation of your HCP

### **Which vaccine should I get?**

It depends on the one (s) made available through MoPH. So far Pfizer, and AstraZeneca (and others)

### **Is it free ? Or if I have to pay and how much?**

Vaccines through MoPH are free

### **Where the vaccine shot is given ?**

In the arm

### **What to expect from the vaccine needle shot ?**

The stick of the needle into your arm won't feel different than any other vaccine injection. Sore arms are common. Millions of people have already received the vaccines, and the overwhelming majority have not reported any serious health problems

### **How long will it take for the first shot to start working?**

It takes a few weeks for your body to begin producing antibodies after any vaccination. You won't get peak protection until after you get the booster shot 3-4 weeks or 6 weeks after the first shot

### **What happens if I am COVID-19 positive while taking the first dose?**

In most cases, it's not known whether the patients already had the virus when they were given the vaccine. You will still take the vaccine if you choose to

### **What happens if I became positive before the second dose?**

If you develop Covid-19 after the first dose, you should still plan on getting the second dose on schedule, but check with your doctor first. And remember, even after two doses, no vaccine offers 100 % protection. But even if you do catch the virus after vaccination, you will experience mild illness because your body, has antibodies ready to fight off the virus

### **How long will the vaccine protection last?**

We have to wait and see the duration of protection. It's possible that Covid-19 vaccinations will become an annual event, just like the flu shot. Or it may be that the benefits of the vaccine last longer than a year.

## **Section II. Questions on safety and possible side effects**

### **What are the expected side effects?**

The stick of the needle into your arm won't feel different than any other vaccine injection. Sore arms are common. Millions of people have already received the vaccines, and the overwhelming majority have not reported any serious health problems (severe allergic reactions have occurred in a small number of cases). Side effects appear within 1-3 days (may resemble the symptoms of Covid-19), last about a day, and appear more likely after the second dose. Some people feel lousy & tired needing one day rest mainly after the second dose. In the Pfizer study, about half developed fatigue. Other side effects including headaches, muscle pain, and chills, occurred in at least 25 - 33 % of cases.

### **When do the side effects show up?**

Side effects appear within 1-3 days (like symptoms of Covid-19 sometimes), last about a day, and appear more likely after the second dose

### **Are the side effects worse after the second dose?**

Yes, side effects are more pronounced after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose. People have reported bad headaches, upset stomach, chills, itching, severe fatigue that sends them to bed for a day and a range of symptoms that feel like a bad flu. Remember this is your immune system building protection/response against the COVID-19  
Get plenty of hydration, rest, and pain-killers if needed

### **If I am allergic or had previous allergies to other vaccines, should I be worried taking COVID-19 vaccine?**

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines don't contain egg or any preservatives found in common vaccines. There is no animal products that violates religious beliefs

You should not get a second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine if you had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to your first dose. Check with your doctor if you can take another type of COVID-19 vaccine

### **Can the vaccine cause COVID-19? No**

### **Is it true that cosmetic injections (lips and wrinkle flatteners) can cause an allergic reaction to vaccine?**

The American Society for Dermatologic Surgery said people with dermal fillers should not delay or avoid the Covid vaccine. The side effects (puffiness, swelling) is rare, temporary and responds to treatments. The swelling also can resolve without treatment. The side effect has not been seen with wrinkle-relaxing injections like Botox or Dysport

### **Does the mRNA vaccine affect my genes? No**

### **Will the vaccine protect against new strains?**

More research and data are developing. Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech both said their vaccines were effective against new variants of the coronavirus discovered in Britain and South Africa

### **Section III. Pregnancy, lactation, and fertility**

#### **Is the vaccine safe for pregnant women in any trimester?**

Yes. Most experts agree that the risks to pregnant women from COVID-19 are far greater than any theoretical harm from the vaccines. "There are no documented risks to the fetus, there's no theoretical risks, there's no risk in animal studies"

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) recommends that COVID-19 vaccines should not be withheld from pregnant individuals who meet criteria for vaccination as per priority for each country

#### **Is it safe for breast-feeding mothers?**

Yes, ACOG recommends that COVID-19 vaccines should be offered to lactating individuals similar to non-lactating individuals when they meet criteria for receipt of the vaccine based on prioritization groups.

The World Health Organization has also considered, in terms of the principle of preventing harm, that there is no specific reason that prevents giving the vaccine to pregnant and lactating women

#### **There are many news on effect of vaccine on miscarriage and fertility? Are they true?**

No. there is no evidence that the vaccine causes miscarriage or infertility (never happened in COVID-19 positive cases!!)

#### **Can I take the vaccine if I am planning to get pregnant?**

Yes. COVID-19 poses an especially high risk to pregnant women, so ideally you should get vaccinated before you become pregnant, depending on your priority group

#### **Shall I take the vaccine if I already had COVID-19?**

Yes. It is safe and beneficial. People who have had COVID in the past are advised to wait about 90 days after infection before getting the shot.