

PREGNANCY AND INFLUENZA

Important information for pregnant women about Pandemic Influenza H1N1 (Swine Flu)



DON'T LET
THE FLU
GET YOU!

NISG
National Influenza
Strategy Group

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.fightflu.co.nz
TXT 'FLU' TO 515
0800 IMMUNE

PREGNANT WOMEN ARE AT GREATER RISK FROM PANDEMIC INFLUENZA H1N1 (SWINE FLU)

Pregnant women who get sick with pandemic influenza H1N1 (swine flu) are more likely to suffer serious complications than women who are not pregnant. Some pregnant women with pandemic influenza H1N1 have had early labour, severe pneumonia and it has proved fatal in a small number of cases.

Recent research conducted in New Zealand and Australia found that **pregnant women are seven times more likely to be admitted to intensive care with severe influenza** than women who are not pregnant.

The study also found that women more than 20 weeks pregnant were at an even higher risk as they were 13 times more likely to be admitted to intensive care than a woman who is not pregnant.

If you are pregnant and have a pre-existing medical condition such as asthma or diabetes, you have an even higher chance of developing severe health complications as a result of influenza. This is because pregnancy, on top of such conditions, can intensify the adverse effects of influenza in your body.

THE VACCINE PROTECTS BABY TOO

Influenza immunisation for pregnant women has clear benefits for both mother and baby.

Mothers who receive influenza vaccine while pregnant can pass protection on to their baby. The vaccine offers protection to infants who would normally be too young (under six months) to receive immunisation individually.

THE VACCINE IS FREE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

The seasonal influenza vaccine is free for pregnant women in 2010. This year's seasonal influenza vaccine will protect you against pandemic influenza H1N1 (swine flu) as well as two other strains that are expected to be the dominant strains circulating in the community this year.

The vaccine is strongly recommended for women who will be pregnant during the influenza season as pregnancy places a woman at greater risk of complications from influenza illness. The vaccine is available from early March until the end of June and may be given to pregnant women after this period if need be.

SEE YOUR HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

The seasonal influenza vaccine is normally given in the second and third trimesters but should also be offered to woman who will be in their first trimester when influenza is circulating, on advice of their health professional.

Speak with your midwife or doctor about getting immunised. It will help keep you and your unborn child safe during the influenza season. If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant and have symptoms of influenza, seek immediate advice from your midwife or doctor.

THE INFLUENZA VACCINE IS A PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE.

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND POSSIBLE RISKS.

For more information visit www.fightflu.co.nz or www.moh.govt.nz