FAQs on COVID-19 Vaccines for Pregnant Women

Why is COVID-19 vaccine being recommended for pregnant women?

Pregnant women with COVID-19 are at an increased risk of:

1. Severe illness compared to non-pregnant women
2. Preterm birth & other adverse outcomes including higher chances of neonatal morbidity
3. Most pregnant women will be asymptomatic or have mild disease, but their health may deteriorate & might affect the foetal outcome
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How does COVID-19 affect the health of pregnant women?

Compared with pregnant women without COVID-19, those with symptomatic COVID-19 are at an increased risk of:

- Adverse pregnancy outcomes including admission to the ICU
- Iatrogenic* preterm birth
- Pre-eclampsia-like symptoms
- Caesarean section and death

*due to any maternal or fetal medical complication necessitating early delivery
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Which pregnant women are at higher risk of developing complications after COVID-19?

Pre-existing comorbidities, advanced maternal age & high BMI are risk factors for severe COVID-19

Pregnant women with the following conditions have greater risk:

- Pre-existing medical conditions e.g. Diabetes
- Congenital or acquired heart disease
- Chronic respiratory conditions like COPD, Asthma, Cystic Fibrosis
- Dialysis or advanced chronic kidney disease
- Receiving immunosuppressive therapies
- Homozygous sickle cell disease; Organ transplant recipients
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Are there any side-effects of the vaccines on pregnant women or her foetus?

Vaccination protects pregnant women against COVID-19 like it protects any other individuals & are unlikely to pose a risk to the pregnant person or foetus.

Like any medicine, a vaccine may have side effects including mild fever, pain at the injection site, or feel unwell for 1-3 days.
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When should the vaccine be given to pregnant women?

The COVID-19 vaccination schedule can be started anytime during pregnancy.

If a pregnant woman has already had COVID, when should she be vaccinated?

In case a woman has been infected during the current pregnancy, then she should be vaccinated soon after the delivery.
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Are there any specific contraindications for vaccination in pregnancy?

Pregnant women should avoid vaccination in the following conditions:

- Severe allergic reaction to the previous dose of COVID-19 vaccine
- Allergic reaction to vaccines or injectable therapies, pharmaceutical products, food-items, etc.
- Diagnosed COVID-19 to defer for 12 weeks from infection or 4 to 8 weeks from recovery
- COVID-19 infection treated with anti-COVID-19 monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma