

PROTECT

yourself and your baby

Get immunised.

The influenza vaccine can be safely given during any stage of pregnancy.

There is no increased risk of reactions to the immunisation for pregnant women and you CANNOT get influenza from the vaccine.

Influenza immunisation will not harm your unborn baby.

It may be reassuring to know that your influenza vaccine does not cross the placenta into your baby. The vaccine simply stimulates your own immune system to make antibodies that can fight off the virus.

The good news is that your antibodies are also passed on to your baby so they are born with some protection against influenza for the first few months of life. Newborns and young infants have higher rates of influenza and hospitalisation than other children, so the protection they receive from you in the womb could make all the difference.

For more information about influenza or the influenza vaccine, talk to your Lead Maternity Carer or doctor. **Or visit fightflu.co.nz**

The National Immunisation Register

The Ministry of Health keeps a record of influenza immunisation on the National Immunisation Register so that authorised health professionals can find out what immunisations have been given. It helps to monitor the population's protection against influenza. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for more information about privacy.

If you do not want your immunisation recorded on the National Immunisation Register please advise your healthcare professional.

What is The Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC)?

IMAC is a nationwide organisation based at the University of Auckland. It provides New Zealanders with a local source of independent, factual information about vaccine-preventable diseases and the benefits and possible risks of immunisation. IMAC manages the promotion of the National Influenza Campaign on behalf of the Ministry of Health.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
FIGHTFLU.CO.NZ
0800 466 863



The influenza vaccine is a prescription medicine. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist about the benefits and possible risks. TAPS NA9775. IMAC1812.

Influenza.
Don't get it.
Don't give it.

AVOID
FLU
DURING
PREGNANCY

Please make sure you get **your free influenza immunisation**



IMMUNISATION IS FREE

for pregnant women

Immunisation against influenza has been shown to be highly beneficial for pregnant women and their unborn babies. Influenza immunisation for all pregnant women is recommended by the World Health Organization and many health authorities including those in the USA, Australia and many European countries.

Immunisation against whooping cough (pertussis) is also recommended and free for women who are 28–38 weeks pregnant. The whooping cough immunisation can be given at the same time as the influenza immunisation.

You are at risk of influenza while pregnant

Influenza is not a cold. It can be a dangerous illness that poses a serious risk to your life and that of your unborn baby. There are a number of influenza related complications that can affect baby's development in the womb and can even lead to miscarriage or premature birth.

A range of physical changes during pregnancy (such as changes in immunity) increase a pregnant woman's risk of serious influenza complications. New Zealand research shows that pregnant women are nearly 5 times more likely to be hospitalised with influenza than women who are not pregnant.

Influenza is dangerous

There are a number of factors that make influenza dangerous to an unborn baby. The influenza virus does not actually cross the placenta to infect your baby, the danger comes from your own body as it fights the illness.

Influenza immunisation is strongly recommended for women who will be (or intend to be) pregnant during autumn and winter

The vaccine is available from March to 31 December each year.

Danger to mum

- ▶ Being pregnant and getting influenza means you are more likely to get pneumonia
- ▶ You are nearly 5 times more likely to be admitted to hospital with influenza compared to a non-pregnant woman

Danger to baby

Influenza during pregnancy increases the risks of:

- ▶ Premature birth
- ▶ Low birth weight
- ▶ Miscarriage/stillbirth
- ▶ Birth defects