

# Vaccinations: After Pregnancy

What you need to know now about vaccines



Things to do **EVERY DAY**  
for healthy women and babies:

**Exercise** – 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week

**Vitamin** – 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folic Acid per day

**Educate yourself** about medicines and chemicals that can cause birth defects

**Reproductive life planning** – set your personal goals for birth control and future children

**Yearly doctor visits** to discuss physical and mental wellness

**Diet** – Vegetables, fruits, and whole grains daily

**Avoid tobacco, drugs, and alcohol**

**Your partner, friends, and family** should be sources of support

Content from [everywomancalifornia.org](http://everywomancalifornia.org) with permission from the Preconception Health Council of California.



## You're healthy. So why do you need vaccinations?

- Vaccines prevent you from getting serious diseases and spreading them to your new baby. Breastfeeding after getting a vaccine will give extra antibodies to your baby for additional protection.
- Vaccines prevent you from getting a serious disease that could affect future pregnancies.
- There may be new vaccinations available or you may need a booster shot for the vaccines you got in the past.
- It is best to get vaccines before you get pregnant again, because some vaccines can be harmful during pregnancy. Some vaccines, like the influenza and tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis vaccines, can be given during pregnancy. Tell your health care provider if you may be pregnant to avoid vaccination risks.

## Are vaccinations safe during breastfeeding?

All the vaccines listed below are safe during breastfeeding. Getting vaccinated stimulates the immune system to make antibodies to fight off infections. You pass these antibodies to your newborn through breastmilk, so your baby is protected, too.

## Recommended postpartum vaccinations

- **Tdap:** Protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Pertussis may not be harmful to healthy adults, but it can be deadly for newborns. Pregnant women can get the Tdap vaccine, and it is safe while breastfeeding.
- **MMR:** Protects against measles, mumps, and rubella. These diseases during pregnancy, especially rubella, can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, and birth defects. If tests show you are not immune to rubella, your provider may recommend you get vaccinated. Pregnant women should not get this vaccine. It is safe while breastfeeding.
- **Varicella:** Protects against chicken pox, which can cause pneumonia during pregnancy and birth defects in the baby. Babies can't get this vaccine until they are a year old, so getting vaccinated helps protect your new baby. Pregnant women should not get this vaccine. It is safe while breastfeeding.
- **Influenza:** Protects against the annual flu, which is very contagious and may be fatal in pregnant women. Pregnant women who get the flu are at risk for pneumonia, miscarriage, and premature birth. The flu vaccine is safe during pregnancy (shot only) and breastfeeding (shot or nose spray).

## Remember your ABCs:

folic **A**cid      **B**reastfeeding      **C**ontraception

## For more information, go to:

Every Woman California: [everywomancalifornia.org/content.cfm?categoriesID=4](http://everywomancalifornia.org/content.cfm?categoriesID=4)

March of Dimes: [marchofdimes.com/Pregnancy/prenatalcare\\_vaccinations.html](http://marchofdimes.com/Pregnancy/prenatalcare_vaccinations.html)