

Pregnant Women Need a Flu Shot

This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

This is Dr. Robert Gaynes from the CDC with an important message for pregnant women.

Although pregnant women account for only about one percent of the U.S. population, they represented five percent of U.S. deaths from 2009 H1N1 flu last season. This season, CDC expects 2009 H1N1, along with other seasonal flu viruses, to spread and cause illness. As a result, this year's flu shot will protect against 2009 H1N1, as well as other seasonal flu viruses.

You might think influenza is “just the flu.” However, flu seasons are unpredictable and can be severe. Flu illness leads to hospitalizations and deaths every year in the United States, even among previously healthy people.

When you're pregnant, you're even more at-risk of getting seriously ill from the flu. Over the years, hundreds of millions of people in the United States, *including* pregnant women just like you, have safely received seasonal flu shots. The shot can't give you the flu, in fact, a flu shot is the single best way you can protect yourself from this potentially serious disease. It can also protect your baby from getting the flu for several months after he or she is born. This is important, because infants can't get the flu shot until they're at least 6 months of age or older.

Pregnant women should receive the flu shot, and not the nasal spray flu vaccine. The nasal spray flu vaccine is recommended for healthy people between 2 and 49 years old who are not pregnant. Women who are not pregnant but are breastfeeding may receive the nasal spray flu vaccine.

Ask your doctor, nurse, or clinic about getting a flu shot today. Getting a flu shot now will protect you all season. And, don't forget to ask everyone who will be around your baby—grandparents, brothers, sisters, other relatives and even babysitters—to get a flu vaccine, too. This will help protect your baby for the first six months after she or he is born.

Keeping yourself and your baby safe during flu season is important. Help prevent the flu by getting a flu shot today. For more information, talk to your doctor, nurse, or clinic, or visit www.flu.gov and www.cdc.gov/flu.

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.