

Pregnant Women: Know the Signs and Symptoms of Flu

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.

You might think that 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, your body changes, and you’re even more at-risk than usual of getting seriously ill from the flu.

Call your doctor or nurse right away if you experience some or all of the following symptoms of flu: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and fatigue. Some people may also experience vomiting or diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults. Even if you have had your flu shot, it is important to let your healthcare provider know if you are having any of these symptoms. Early treatment is important for pregnant women. If needed, your doctor will prescribe an antiviral medicine that treats the flu. Having a fever caused by flu infection, or other infections, early in pregnancy can lead to birth defects in an unborn child. Pregnant women who get a fever should treat their fever with Tylenol® (or store brand equivalent) and contact their doctor as soon as possible.

If you have any of these emergency warning signs, call 9-1-1 right away:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- High fever that is not responding to Tylenol® (or store brand equivalent)
- Decreased or no movement of your baby.

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.