

MANAGING INFLUENZA (FLU) WITH A BABY AT HOME

Symptoms of Influenza (flu)

Influenza is an illness that last for 5-7 days

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)

What if I get flu?

- Keep breast feeding
- Control your temperature with paracetamol
- See your GP early if flu symptoms develop. Your doctor will advise you on treatment options, including antiviral medications

What if someone in my family gets flu?

- Keep them away from the baby if possible
- Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your baby

What if my baby does get flu?

- Keep breast feeding
- Your baby needs to be urgently assessed by a doctor
- Keep your baby away from other people, especially other babies, children and pregnant women

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

24 Hour Health advice line 1800 022 222

Karitane 1300 227 464

Tresillian 1800 637 357

Parent Helpline
(24 hour service) 1300 130 052

MotherSafe
Sydney Metropolitan Area 9382 6539
Non-Metropolitan Area 1800 647 848

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

NSW Ministry of Health

www.health.nsw.gov.au/PublicHealth/Infectious/influenza/pregnant_women.asp

NSW Public Health Units

www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/infectious/phus.asp

Immunise Australia Program

www.immunise.health.gov.au
click on Diseases and Programs A-Z then "Influenza"

National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance

www.ncirs.edu.au/immunisation/fact-sheets/influenza-fact-sheet.pdf

Influenza Vaccination in Pregnancy

Protect you and your baby from influenza (flu)



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Health

WHAT IS INFLUENZA?

Influenza, or flu, is an infectious disease caused by a virus. The influenza virus is mainly spread from person to person through droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through touching.

HOW DO I AVOID GETTING FLU?

There are some simple things that everyone can do to prevent getting flu or passing it on to others:

- Get vaccinated against flu
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, use disposable tissues, and dispose of tissues immediately after use
- Wash your hands regularly, especially after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- Keep away from people you know are sick with flu
- Avoid crowded places where there may be other people sick with flu

SEVERE INFLUENZA IN PREGNANCY

Pregnant women in their second and third trimester are at greater risk of very severe illness from flu.

Healthy women with an uncomplicated pregnancy can develop life-threatening influenza. However, severe illness from influenza is probably more common in women who have another condition such as diabetes, obesity or asthma.

The risk of premature labour and delivery is also increased in pregnant women with influenza.

If you are pregnant and develop symptoms of influenza you should contact your doctor as soon as possible, as treatment with antiviral medication may be advised.



KEEP YOUR BABY SAFE

Vaccination during pregnancy has shown to benefit both mother and baby; protective antibodies are transferred across the placenta protecting the baby for up to six months.

Babies are at higher risk of more severe influenza.

Infants less than six months of age are up to ten times more likely to go to hospital with influenza than older children. Influenza vaccines are not licensed for children less than six months of age so protection can only be achieved by vaccinating a mother during pregnancy.

Babies are at risk of severe complications following influenza especially:

- Lower respiratory tract infections e.g. Pneumonia
- Acute otitis media

Seasonal influenza vaccine is available free from your General Practitioner (GP).

FLU VACCINATION

There is a vaccine prepared before every winter against influenza (seasonal influenza vaccine).

In young healthy adults influenza vaccine is around 80% effective in preventing influenza infection.

Up to one in ten of all adults who receive influenza vaccine experience side effects such as low grade fever, tiredness and muscle aches. Local redness and swelling at the injection site is also common.

There is extensive experience of safe use of influenza vaccine in pregnant women.

There is no evidence of harmful effects on the developing baby.¹

WHEN SHOULD I HAVE INFLUENZA VACCINE?

Influenza vaccine can be safely given to women planning to have a baby or at any stage during pregnancy irrespective of their delivery date.

¹ Moro PL, et al *Adverse events following administration to pregnant women of influenza A (H1N1) 2009 monovalent vaccine reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System.* Am J Obstet Gynecol. 2011 Nov;205(5):473.e1-9

Tamma PD, et al *Safety of influenza vaccination during pregnancy.* Am J Obstet Gynecol. 2009 Dec;201(6):547-52.