



PROLOGUE

OBSTETRICS | FERTILITY

VACCINATIONS IN PREGNANCY

Prologue supports informed and personalised decision making
regarding vaccines in pregnancy.

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Vaccination against certain viruses is recommended in pregnancy.

The safety of these vaccinations has been the subject of much robust research and the conclusion of this is that they are totally safe for both the mother and unborn baby. The reason for recommending these specific vaccinations during pregnancy, is mostly due to the fact that they trigger the production of protective antibodies that are able to cross placenta. This means not only is the mother protected but these vaccines provide good protection to the unborn baby and this immunity that may persist for several months after birth. These specific vaccines have also been chosen as they target viruses that can be very serious for newborns who would otherwise have no protection against them.

Your Prologue obstetrics team is here to help you consider these vaccinations and their timing so we can offer that you and your baby have the best possible level of protection in pregnancy and for your baby's first few months of life, before they are able to follow their own immunisation schedule.

Prologue always supports informed decision making and will always support you in that process. Our team is not here to judge your decision regarding vaccines and very much encourages you to make decisions in this area that are best aligned with your values and intuition.

INFLUENZA VACCINE

The Influenza vaccine is recommended for all women during pregnancy. Women who acquire Influenza during pregnancy have an increased risk of poor health outcomes, and are also at higher risk of preterm birth. Receiving an influenza vaccine during your pregnancy also reduces the risks and complications associated with severe influenza for your baby in the first 6 months of their life.

If you are pregnant and received the previous year's seasonal influenza vaccine early in your pregnancy care, it is advised to receive the current seasonal influenza vaccine (when it becomes available) later in the same pregnancy. If you received your influenza vaccine before becoming pregnant, you should be revaccinated during pregnancy to protect your unborn baby.

The influenza vaccine is recommended for all pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy, particularly those who will be in the second or third trimester during the influenza season. The vaccine can be given at the same time as, or separate to, Whooping Cough vaccine, RSV vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine.

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WHOOPING COUGH (PERTUSSIS) VACCINE

Pertussis, commonly known as 'Whooping Cough', is a disease of the respiratory tract caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. It is highly infectious in unvaccinated people. In Australia, pertussis epidemics usually occur every 3-4 years.

Vaccination during pregnancy reduces the risk of Whooping Cough in young infants (aged 3-4 months) by 90%. This results from direct passive protection by transplacental transfer of pertussis antibodies from you to your unborn baby during pregnancy. Vaccination is recommended during each pregnancy, including pregnancies that are closely spaced, to provide maximal protection to every infant.

Your Pertussis vaccine is given as a single dose, and is best timed between 20 and 32 weeks gestation. You can receive your Pertussis vaccine at the same time as, or separate to your RSV, Influenza and COVID-19 vaccines.

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV) VACCINE

RSV infection in infants often causes lower respiratory tract disease, such as bronchiolitis. It is most likely to be severe during the first 6 months of life, frequently requiring hospitalisation. Maternal immunisation reduces the risk of severe RSV disease in infants under 6 months of age by around 70%. This is the result of passive protection by transplacental transfer of RSV-specific antibodies from the mother to the fetus during pregnancy.

Maternal RSV vaccine is administered mainly to protect newborn infants. Vaccination may also protect pregnant women against RSV disease, but this is usually mild in women of child-bearing age.

A single dose of the Abrysvo brand of this vaccine is recommended during your pregnancy to protect your baby. Administration is recommended at 28-36 weeks gestation, but it can be given beyond 36 weeks gestation. However, infants are not expected to be adequately protected unless they are born at least 2 weeks after their mother received the vaccine.

You can receive the RSV vaccine at the same time as, or separate to your Whooping Cough, Influenza and COVID-19.

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COVID-19 VACCINE

Unvaccinated pregnant women are at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19. Unvaccinated pregnant women are recommended to receive a primary course of COVID-19 vaccine. Dosing and vaccine choice recommendations are the same as for non-pregnant people of the same age.

Unless a woman is otherwise eligible, a dose of COVID-19 vaccine is not routinely recommended in pregnancy. However, a booster vaccine during pregnancy may reduce the risk of severe COVID-19 in young infants through transplacental passage of antibodies.

You can receive a Covid vaccination at the same time, or separate to your Whooping Cough, Influenza and RSV vaccines.

