What if I Get Measles While I'm Pregnant?

What is measles?

Measles is a sickness caused by a virus. It spreads easily through the air when someone with measles coughs or sneezes. It can start with a high fever, cough, runny nose, and red eyes. A few days later, a rash shows up. Some people who get measles get very sick.

Is it dangerous to get measles if I am pregnant?

Yes, it is very dangerous to get measles while pregnant. If you get measles when you are pregnant, your baby might be born too early, be sick with measles, or be very small. You could even lose the baby.

Is it safe to get a measles vaccine if I am pregnant?

No, it is not safe to get the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine while you are pregnant. Women can get the vaccine before they are pregnant. It is recommended to get the vaccine at least 28 days (4 weeks) before getting pregnant.

It is safe for others around you to get the MMR vaccine while you are pregnant. Pregnant women are more protected when everyone around them is vaccinated.

You can get a medicine called immunoglobulin (IG) if you are exposed to measles while you are pregnant. This medicine will help protect you and the baby. You have to get this medicine 6 days or less after you are exposed to measles for it to work.

Is it safe to get the measles vaccine if I am breastfeeding?

Yes, it is safe to get the vaccine if you are breastfeeding. Breastfeeding does **not** change how the vaccine works. Your baby will **not** be harmed by the vaccine. If a mom has had the measles vaccine, they can give some protection to the baby in their breast milk.

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What happens if my baby is born in the hospital while I have measles?

If your baby is healthy, they can stay with mom in the hospital. If your baby is sick or very small they might need more help, and they will go to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

What is a NICU?

A NICU is a special area of the hospital where sick or small babies can get special care.

What happens if my baby goes to the NICU in the hospital?

If your baby needs special care, they will stay in the NICU where doctors can care for them day and night, until they are healthy.

Who can visit my baby in the NICU?

Because all the babies in the NICU are sick or small, the hospital has to be very careful that people do not bring germs into the NICU. Anyone who is not sick, has written proof of an MMR vaccine, or has had a blood test to show they had measles in the past can visit the baby.

If mom has measles in the hospital, she can visit her baby when she is not going to make anyone else sick with measles. This is four days after mom's measles rash started.

Who can not visit my baby in the hospital?

Anyone who has been exposed to measles, and who has not had the MMR vaccine, will not be able to visit the baby in the NICU for 21 days after they were exposed to measles. This is to make sure your baby and all the babies in the NICU do not get measles.

Anyone who is sick will not be able to visit the baby in the NICU to make sure your baby and all the babies in the NICU do not get sick.