



# Promoting Respiratory Illness Vaccination 2023–2024 Toolkit for People Who Are Pregnant

Wisconsin Department of Health Services | Division of Public Health  
Bureau of Communicable Diseases | Immunization Section

# Table of Contents

---

**Background**..... 3

**Health Education and Outreach Tools** ..... 3

**Respiratory Illness Vaccination Message Map**..... 4

**Sample Social Media Messages** ..... 6

# Background

---

People who are pregnant are at higher risk of getting seriously sick with respiratory illnesses due to the changes in their immune system, heart, and lungs that happen during pregnancy. These changes in the body can continue even after pregnancy. Therefore, people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future are encouraged to get their yearly flu and COVID-19 vaccines to protect themselves against disease. Getting a flu and COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to prevent getting severely sick, hospitalized, or worse from the flu and COVID-19. In addition, people who get vaccinated while pregnant also protect their babies from flu and COVID-19 for several months after birth when they are too young to be vaccinated.

As of March 2023, flu vaccination coverage for people who are pregnant was estimated at 48.8%, which was lower than estimates from the previous two years (51.8% in 2022 and 61.3% in 2021). Coverage estimates for pregnant people from the 2022 to 2023 flu season show a large disparity (18.06 percentage points) between coverage for non-Hispanic white pregnant people and non-Hispanic Black pregnant people. These disparities stem from many factors including differential treatment and education by health care providers prenatally, during childbirth, and postpartum among parents and families of different races and ethnicities. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) encourages partners and health care providers offering services to people who are pregnant to use the resources included in this toolkit to promote respiratory illness vaccination during the 2023 to 2024 season.

# Health Education and Outreach Tools

---

Promote respiratory illness vaccination among people who are pregnant by sharing the information included in this toolkit and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [website](#).

## Posters, Factsheets, and More

- Print free posters from DHS about [flu vaccination](#) and additional [respiratory illnesses](#) (available in multiple languages) and from CDC about flu vaccination (available in [English](#) and [Chinese](#)) and COVID-19 vaccination (available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) to post in restrooms and waiting areas.
- Print and distribute a free educational fact sheet on how to prevent [flu](#), [COVID-19](#), and other [respiratory viruses](#) from DHS (available in multiple languages).
- Print and share a [CDC](#) fact sheet with vaccine information for people who are pregnant.

- Share a [CDC](#) toolkit with COVID-19 vaccination information for pregnant people and new parents.
- Looking for other resources or posters? Check out the [DHS Respiratory Viruses](#) page for more information on COVID-19, flu, and RSV, and the Families Fighting Flu's [free resources](#).

### **Talking with People who are Pregnant about Flu Vaccination**

- See answers to [frequently asked questions](#) about flu vaccination for people who are pregnant. See answers to [frequently asked questions](#) about COVID-19 vaccination for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Learn how to make a [strong vaccine recommendation](#) to patients who are pregnant and [talking to pregnant people](#) about vaccines.
- Use this [toolkit](#) to see best practices and more information to increase maternal immunizations in a health care setting.

### **Website Add-Ons**

Easily add CDC's [vaccine content](#) to your website to help encourage people who are pregnant to get vaccinated using [content syndication](#).

### **Social Media Posts**

Share sample messages and images (included in this toolkit) on your social media platforms. You can also share social media posts from DHS or other organizations (such as the CDC or World Health Organization) on your own social media channels. Please also include information on free or lower-cost vaccine programs you have for people who are un-/underinsured.

## **Respiratory Illness Vaccination Message Map**

---

### **General Information**

- The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are safe and the best way to protect yourself and baby from getting flu and COVID-19.
- You can get your flu and COVID-19 vaccine at any time while you are pregnant. Flu vaccines have been safely given to people who are pregnant for decades. Evidence continues to build showing that COVID-19 vaccinations during pregnancy are safe and effective.
- Contact a doctor or other health care provider if you have any questions about flu vaccination while pregnant.

Key Messages	Supporting Information
<p>1. You should get your flu and COVID-19 vaccine in the fall.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future should get a flu and COVID-19 vaccine as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and [insert your organization's name].</li> <li>• It takes about two weeks for the flu and COVID-19 vaccines to fully work by activating your immune system to build up antibodies that protect you against each virus.</li> <li>• Even if you didn't get vaccinated before respiratory illness season began, it is never too late to protect yourself and baby by getting a flu and COVID-19 vaccine.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Getting a flu and COVID-19 vaccine protects both you and your baby.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who are pregnant are at higher risk of getting seriously sick with flu and COVID-19 due to the changes in their immune system, heart, and lungs that happen during pregnancy. These changes in the body can continue even after pregnancy. Getting a flu and COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to prevent getting severely sick, hospitalized, or worse from both diseases.</li> <li>• Getting your flu and COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant can protect your baby from flu and COVID-19 for several months after they are born. This gives them protection when they are too young to get vaccinated.</li> <li>• You can get your flu or COVID-19 vaccine at any time while you are pregnant.</li> <li>• Flu vaccines have been safely given to people who are pregnant for decades. Evidence continues to build showing that COVID-19 vaccinations during pregnancy are safe and effective.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Call a doctor or other health care provider to make a vaccine appointment today!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can get vaccinated at a doctor's office, local pharmacy, local health department, or find a vaccinator at <a href="https://www.vaccines.gov">Vaccines.gov</a>.</li> <li>• If the cost of the vaccine is a concern, you may be eligible for <a href="#">free or lower-cost vaccines</a>.</li> <li>• You can get both a COVID-19 and flu vaccine at the same time.</li> <li>• There is enough supply for everyone to get a COVID-19 and flu vaccine.</li> </ul>

# Sample Social Media Messages

Promote flu and COVID-19 vaccination among people who are pregnant by sharing these important messages on your social media channels. Please use and modify them freely. Edit to reflect the style and voice of your organization and the needs of your social media followers.

The linked photos are also suggestions. While many of the photos below are free to use, your organization may have policies that prohibit their use. Check with your legal team regarding your policies on using the photos linked below.

Timeframe	Post	Photo link
Anytime	Having a baby? Don't forget to get vaccinated against flu and COVID-19! Getting a flu and COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant is safe and protects you and your baby for several months after they are born. #VaccinationIsImportant #TogetherWeAreStrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-pregnant-woman-having-a-consultation-7089329/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-pregnant-woman-having-a-consultation-7089329/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/standing-woman-holding-her-belly-1765353/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/standing-woman-holding-her-belly-1765353/</a></li> </ul>
Anytime	Newborn babies are too young to receive the flu and COVID-19 vaccines. But getting vaccinated while pregnant protects you and offers protection for your baby for several months after they are born. Vaccination during pregnancy is a safe and an important tool to protect your new baby from viruses. #PreventionIsProtection #VaccinationIsImportant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-hands-touching-baby-bump-4513731/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-hands-touching-baby-bump-4513731/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-pregnant-woman-rubbing-her-baby-bump-7055929/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-pregnant-woman-rubbing-her-baby-bump-7055929/</a></li> </ul>
Early Fall	Respiratory illness season is here! The best way to protect you and your loved ones is to get vaccinated against flu and COVID-19. Vaccines are safe and effective against disease. Find a COVID-19 vaccine location near you: <a href="https://www.vaccines.gov/">https://www.vaccines.gov/</a> #VaccinationIsImportant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/family-gathering-for-a-group-hug-4262424/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/family-gathering-for-a-group-hug-4262424/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/girl-getting-vaccinated-3992931/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/girl-getting-vaccinated-3992931/</a></li> </ul>
Late Fall	Help your family stay active and healthy this winter by getting vaccinated against COVID-19 and the flu. You can get both at the same time! Call a doctor or pharmacy to make an appointment today. #TogetherWeAreStrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/women-playing-basketball-2116469/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/women-playing-basketball-2116469/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-man-pulling-a-sled-and-snow-tube-6617820/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-man-pulling-a-sled-and-snow-tube-6617820/</a></li> </ul>

Winter Holidays	<p>Give the gift of health this holiday season! Getting vaccinated against respiratory diseases is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones.</p> <p>#HealthIsAGift #HappyHealthyHolidays</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-girl-putting-a-christmas-star-on-a-christmas-tree-5727889/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-girl-putting-a-christmas-star-on-a-christmas-tree-5727889/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/smiling-pregnant-woman-caressing-tummy-in-house-room-5427247/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/smiling-pregnant-woman-caressing-tummy-in-house-room-5427247/</a></li> </ul>
March/Early Spring	<p>Spring is almost here! But germs are still very active. It's never too late to get your flu and COVID-19 vaccines and protect your family and your new baby against serious disease.</p> <p>#TogetherWeAreStrong</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-couple-holding-their-daughter-while-having-fun-7678079/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-couple-holding-their-daughter-while-having-fun-7678079/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-young-girl-holding-her-mother-pregnant-belly-9214921/">https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-young-girl-holding-her-mother-pregnant-belly-9214921/</a></li> </ul>

If you use any of these template posts or have feedback, please let us know! Questions? Need help? [Email us!](#)

You can also use other free CDC communication resources for [flu](#) and [COVID-19](#) or the Families Fighting Flu [toolkit](#). Consider posting about and sharing the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's educational vaccination [video game](#) and [trivia game](#).