COVID-19 AND PREGNANCY IN WISCONSIN

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people's experiences during pregnancy.

Data collected early in the COVID-19 pandemic allows us to better understand how COVID-19 has impacted pregnancy in Wisconsin. Multiple data sources were used to assess the impact of COVID-19 during pregnancy. Information, including pregnancy status, on COVID-19 cases is reported to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services through the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS). Additional data elements related to the pandemic were collected through the 2020 Wisconsin Pregnancy Risk Assessment and Monitoring System (PRAMS) COVID-19 supplement.

WEDSS

- WEDSS collects information on reported COVID-19 infections
- WEDSS data were linked to vital records to identify or confirm pregnancy status
- Data analysis includes infections that occurred during March 2020–July 2021

PRAMS

- PRAMS identifies persons who recently gave birth
- Survey supplement asked about experiences related to COVID-19 among birthing persons
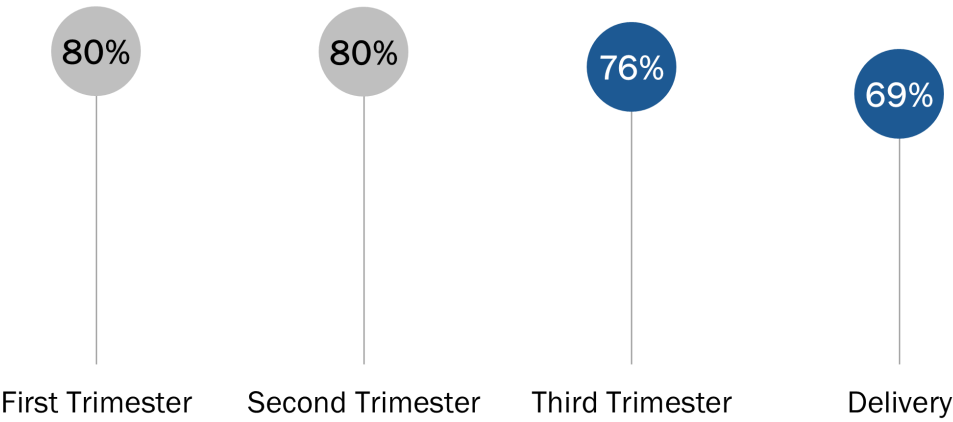- Data analysis includes births that occurred during 2020

COVID-19 infection during pregnancy in Wisconsin

**7,657** individuals had COVID-19 during pregnancy between March 2020 and July 2021.
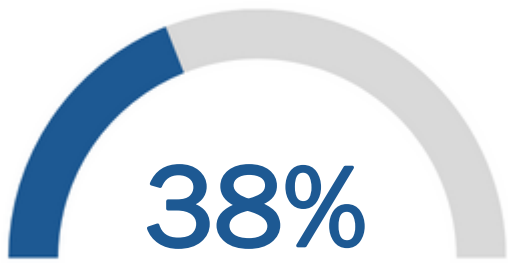
38% of COVID-19 infections identified during pregnancy occurred during the third trimester or at delivery.

80% First Trimester

80% Second Trimester

76% Third Trimester

69% Delivery

Among individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 during pregnancy, those who tested positive during the third trimester and at delivery were less likely to have initiated breastfeeding at discharge.

Experiences of birthing persons during the COVID-19 pandemic in Wisconsin, 2020

44%
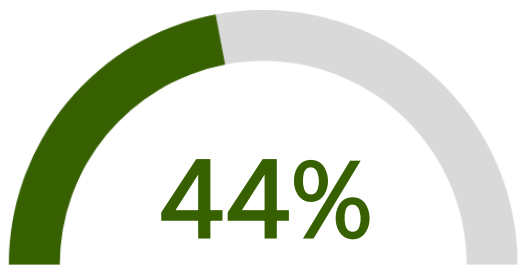
of birthing persons missed or delayed scheduled health care visits for any reason during the pandemic.

The most common reasons care was missed or delayed due to COVID-19 were health care **providers closing their office or reducing hours** and **fear of being exposed** to COVID-19.

43%

Income

Birthing persons who themselves or someone in their household lost job or experienced a decrease in income

> " *COVID made this pregnancy hard emotionally, financially, being isolated.*
>
> PRAMS Respondent

40%

Health care access

Birthing persons who reported receiving virtual health care visits instead of in-person visits

> " *COVID fears hindered [my] pregnancy and caused anxiety and fear of catching it at [my] doctor's office, appointments, [and] hospital delivery.*
>
> PRAMS Respondent

18%

Unemployment

Birthing persons who applied for unemployment insurance

> " *I lost my job due to COVID-19 and applied for...Food share and unemployment...my unemployment refuses to pay me for 6 weeks because I had a baby. The system that is supposed to help out in tough times during this pandemic had let down a lot of mothers and babies.*
>
> PRAMS Respondent

Pregnant and recently pregnant people should continue to take steps to protect themselves from getting sick with COVID-19.

Data from Wisconsin PRAMS found that COVID-19 increased financial stress and impacted health care visits among birthing persons. Wisconsin's Maternal Mortality Review Program also identified an increase in deaths among recently pregnant and pregnant people due to COVID-19. These deaths occurred in people who were unvaccinated and developed COVID-19 during pregnancy. Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, wearing a mask when needed, and frequent hand washing are a few ways to stay healthy and prevent infection during pregnancy.

Click to learn more about COVID-19 and PRAMS or use the QR code to find a vaccination site near you!

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT *of* **HEALTH SERVICES**