

Vaccinate Pregnant Moms to Protect Babies from the Flu



By Ruth Kava — May 4, 2016



Young Infant via [Shutterstock](#) [1]

Babies can't be immunized against influenza until they're around 6 months old, so it's important that their mothers get vaccinated during pregnancy so that they can pass their antibodies to the babies before birth. A recent [study](#) [2] confirms the importance of this procedure.

Researchers from the University of Utah Medical School reported in the journal *Pediatrics* that infants whose moms had been vaccinated against the flu had a 70 percent reduction in cases of flu, compared to babies whose mothers hadn't been vaccinated.

Led by Dr. Julie H. Shakib, they analyzed the health records of over 245,000 moms and 249,000 babies (some births were multiples) between 2005 and 2014. About 10 percent of the mothers had been vaccinated against influenza while pregnant.

The results were clear. Within the first six months of life, 97 percent of confirmed cases of flu in the babies were in those whose mothers had not been immunized. The researchers were assured that the results were due to flu vaccinations because another respiratory virus occurred at similar rates in babies whose moms had or had not been vaccinated against influenza.

The senior author on the study, Dr. Carrie L. Byington, was [quoted](#) [3]: "About 50 percent of pregnant women reported being immunized in the latest flu season. But we need to get that number much closer to 100 percent."

The information about the efficacy of vaccinating pregnant women should be in all obstetricians' and midwives' offices. It makes no sense to leave the youngest vulnerable to the ravages of the flu (which can be fatal in the young) when a simple vaccination could prevent it.

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2016/05/04/vaccinate-pregnant-moms-to-protect-babies-from-the-flu>

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[1] <http://shutterstock.com>

[2] <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/Vaccinating-Pregnant-Women-Against-the-Flu-Protects-their-Infants.aspx?nfstatus=401&nftoken=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000&nfstatusdescription=ERROR%3a+No+local+token>

[3]

http://www.sciencecodex.com/infants_much_less_likely_to_get_the_flu_if_moms_are_vaccinated_while_pregnant-181598