



## *Your important health information*

# The importance of immunisation before and during pregnancy

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## Immunisation

- Can protect you, your unborn baby and your newborn against some infectious diseases. These diseases can cause serious harm to you and your baby.

## Before pregnancy

### Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR),

- Rubella infection, also known as German measles, during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects.
- Check your rubella immunity before each pregnancy.
- You should wait four weeks after receiving the vaccine before trying to get pregnant.
- Do not have the vaccine if you are already pregnant.

### Varicella (chickenpox)

- Chickenpox infection in pregnancy can rarely cause severe illness in you and your unborn baby.
- If you cannot remember if you have had chickenpox, ask your general practitioner (GP) for a blood test to check.
- Wait four weeks after receiving the vaccine before trying to get pregnant.

## During pregnancy

### Influenza (flu)

- Pregnant women are more likely to have serious complications from flu infection.
- Flu immunisation is recommended for all pregnant women.

### Pertussis (whooping cough)

- Vaccinating against whooping cough during pregnancy protects your baby during the first months after birth.
- A whooping cough vaccine (Boostrix) is recommended after 20 weeks of pregnancy, even if you have had one before pregnancy, or during a previous pregnancy.
- The vaccine for whooping cough also immunises against tetanus and diphtheria

## After pregnancy

- A Boostrix vaccination to prevent whooping cough is still valuable after pregnancy if you have not had one in the last 10 years.

## What about breastfeeding?

- These vaccines are safe while you are breastfeeding.

## What about parents, grandparents, children and others who care for my baby?

- A Boostrix vaccine every 10 years is recommended for all people who care for your baby.
- It is safe for them to have these vaccines while you are pregnant.
- Your other children should also be up to date with immunisations to help protect your newborn baby.
- Please see your general practitioner (GP) to discuss immunisation.

## What about my baby?

- All babies should be immunised as recommended by the National Immunisation Program.

## Helpful link

<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/pregnant-women>.

### Further Information:

Talk to your GP, obstetrician or midwife to learn more.

### Acknowledgements

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