

Covid-19 vaccines and fertility



The British Fertility Society and Association of Reproductive Clinical Scientists have created this document in response to questions that patients have been asking about Covid-19 vaccines and fertility. The availability of safe and effective vaccines against Covid-19 offers a way for many of our patients to protect themselves against this disease, and access fertility treatment safely.

These FAQ were created on 8th February 2021 and are correct at the time of publication. Please be aware that the speed of scientific research in this area is very rapid. Hence, we advise any concerned person to always discuss their individual situation with their health care provider.

Should people of reproductive age receive a Covid-19 vaccine?

Yes.

People of reproductive age are advised to have the vaccine when they receive their invitation for vaccination. This includes those who are trying to have a baby as well as those who are thinking about having a baby, whether that is in the near future or in a few years' time.

Can any of the Covid-19 vaccines affect fertility?

No.

There is absolutely no evidence, and no theoretical reason, that any of the vaccines can affect the fertility of women or men.

Can I have a Covid-19 vaccine during my fertility treatment (IVF, Frozen Embryo Transfer, Egg Freezing, Ovulation Induction, Intra-Uterine Insemination, using donated gametes or not)?

Yes.

You may wish to consider the timing of having a Covid-19 vaccine during your fertility treatment, taking into account that some people may get bothersome side effects in the few days after vaccination that they do not want to have during treatment. These include for example, tenderness at the injection site, fever, headache, muscle ache or feeling tired. It may be sensible to separate the date of vaccination by a few days from some treatment procedures (for example, egg collection in IVF), so that any symptoms, such as fever, might be attributed correctly to the vaccine or the treatment procedure. Your medical team will be able to advise you about the best time for your situation.

Should I delay my fertility treatment until after I have had the Covid-19 vaccine?

The only reason to consider delaying fertility treatment until after you have been vaccinated would be if you wanted to be protected against Covid-19 before you were pregnant. The chance of successful treatment is unlikely to be affected by a short delay, for example of up to 6 months, particularly if you are 37 years of age or younger. However, delays of several months may affect your chance of success once you are over 37 and especially if you are 40 years of age or older.

How soon after having a Covid-19 vaccine can I start my fertility treatment?

Immediately – you do not need to delay your fertility treatment, unless you wish to have your second dose before pregnancy (see above).

I had a positive pregnancy test today. Can I still have a Covid-19 vaccine?

If you are in a risk category for Covid-19, either because of the potential for exposure at work or medical issues, you can still have the vaccine in pregnancy. If you have no increased risks for Covid-19, the Joint Committee on Vaccination & Immunisation (JCVI) have advised that you delay it until after pregnancy. There is no reason to believe that any of the Covid-19 vaccines would be harmful, but their effects in pregnancy have not yet been fully investigated. The information that is known is reassuring. None of the vaccines contain live virus and so there is no risk that the pregnant woman or her baby could get Covid-19 from the vaccine.

For further information on vaccination in pregnancy, see the information produced by the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists [<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/news/updated-advice-on-covid-19-vaccination-in-pregnancy-and-women-who-are-breastfeeding/>]. The health care professional looking after you in pregnancy will be able to advise you taking into account your individual risk.

I am donating my eggs/sperm for the use of others. Can I still have a Covid-19 vaccine?

Yes.

Covid-19 vaccines do not contain any virus and so you cannot pass on Covid-19 by receiving the vaccine. The Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority have stated that you must allow at least 7 days from the most recent vaccination prior to donating eggs or sperm. If the donor feels unwell after the vaccination, they must not donate for 7 days after their symptoms have got better [<https://portal.hfea.gov.uk/media/1652/2020-12-30-covid-19-clinic-faqs.pdf>].

I have had recurrent miscarriages and am now trying to get pregnant again. Should I postpone having a Covid-19 vaccine?

No.

There is no reason to postpone having your Covid-19 vaccine as it will not affect your risk of having a miscarriage.

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Disclaimer

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Please be aware that the evidence and advice for COVID-19 vaccines for those trying to achieve a pregnancy or those who are pregnant already is rapidly developing and the latest data or best practice may not yet be incorporated into the current version of this document. ARCS and BFS recommend that patients always seek the advice of their local centre if they have any concerns.