

Preventive tips to keep you healthy... from New London Hospital.

Pregnancy and the Flu

If you are pregnant, the flu can be very serious for both you and your baby. Some pregnant women sick with H1N1 flu have had early labor and severe pneumonia. Some have been hospitalized and some have died.



Pregnant women should get vaccinated for both H1N1 or swine flu and seasonal flu. The seasonal flu vaccine has been given safely to millions of pregnant women over the past 45 years. Flu shots have not been shown to cause harm to pregnant women or their babies. The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine is made the same way as the seasonal flu vaccine. The type of mercury used in some vaccines has not been shown to be harmful to a pregnant woman or her unborn baby, and has not been found to cause autism. However, if you are still concerned, there is an H1N1 shot without mercury.

If you think you have the flu, contact your pregnancy care provider immediately so that flu medications can be started. Go immediately to the emergency room if you have difficulty breathing; pressure or pain in your chest (other than pain when you cough); are unable to keep liquids down; are becoming confused or less alert; or are dizzy when standing.

Prevention tips

Wash your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching your nose, mouth, or eyes. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or sneeze into your sleeve and throw the tissue in the trash. Stay away from sick people while you are pregnant. Have a plan for someone else to take care of a sick family member. If you come in close contact with someone who has the flu, contact your pregnancy care provider right away. You may need medicine to reduce your chances of getting the flu.

For more tips to help you stay well, sign up for our e-newsletter, *Discover Health* by sending your email to discover.health@newlondonhospital.org



Source: National Institutes of Health
Note: This is for information purposes only and not intended for use in place of the advice of a healthcare provider.

