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Infections and Pregnancy

How can infections affect your pregnancy?

During pregnancy [<https://medlineplus.gov/pregnancy.html>] , some common infections such as the common cold [<https://medlineplus.gov/commoncold.html>] or a skin infection do not usually cause serious problems. Some infections, such as the flu [<https://medlineplus.gov/flu.html>] , can be more severe when you're pregnant. But other infections can be harmful to you, your fetus, or both.

Certain infections during pregnancy may lead to or cause complications or health problems for your fetus, such as:

- Preterm birth [<https://medlineplus.gov/preterm labor.html>]
- Low birth weight [<https://medlineplus.gov/birthweight.html>]
- Serious illness
- Birth defects [<https://medlineplus.gov/birthdefects.html>]
- Lifelong disabilities, such as hearing loss [<https://medlineplus.gov/hearingproblemsinchildren.html>] or learning problems [<https://medlineplus.gov/learningdisabilities.html>]

What infections can be harmful during pregnancy?

Some infections that can be harmful during pregnancy include:

- Bacterial vaginosis (BV)
- Group B strep (GBS) [<https://medlineplus.gov/streptococcalinfections.html>]
- Cytomegalovirus [<https://medlineplus.gov/cytomegalovirusinfections.html>]
- Hepatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/hepatitis.html>]
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) [<https://medlineplus.gov/sexuallytransmittedinfections.html>]
- Toxoplasmosis [<https://medlineplus.gov/toxoplasmosis.html>]
- Urinary tract infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/urinarytractinfections.html>]
- Yeast infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/yeastinfections.html>]
- Zika virus [<https://medlineplus.gov/zikavirus.html>]

What are the symptoms of an infection during pregnancy?

Sometimes, it's hard to know what's normal during pregnancy. Symptoms of an infection can vary based on the infection. Talk with your health care provider about what symptoms to look for and how to keep healthy. But, if something is worrying you, share your symptoms with your provider for early detection [<https://medlineplus.gov/prenataltesting.html>] and treatment of infections.

What are the treatments for infections during pregnancy?

If you do get an infection during pregnancy, contact your provider about treatment that will best protect you and your fetus. Only some medicines are safe during pregnancy [<https://medlineplus.gov/pregnancyandmedicines.html>] .

Can infections during pregnancy be prevented?

Taking care of yourself and getting early and regular prenatal care [<https://medlineplus.gov/prenatalcare.html>] from your provider may help identify and treat infections early.

To lower your risk of certain infections or prevent others:


- Don't eat raw or undercooked meat.
- Don't share food or drinks with other people.
- Wash your hands [<https://medlineplus.gov/germsandhygiene.html>] frequently.
- Don't clean litter boxes. Cats can transmit toxoplasmosis.
- Talk to your provider about vaccinations [<https://medlineplus.gov/vaccines.html>] .
- If you have sex, use a condom every time.

Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health

Start Here

- **Pregnancy Complications** [<https://womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/youre-pregnant-now-what/pregnancy-complications>]
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/youre-pregnant-now-what/pregnancy-complications>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- **Strep B Test** [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/strep-b-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-estreptococos-del-grupo-b/>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/hpv-vaccine-pregnancy/>]
(Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/la-vacuna-del-vph/>]
- **People at Risk: Pregnant Women** [<https://www.foodsafety.gov/people-at-risk/pregnant-women>]
(Department of Health and Human Services)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.foodsafety.gov/personas-en-riesgo-mg5v/embarazadas>]
- **Preventing Group B Strep Disease in Newborns** [<https://www.cdc.gov/group-b-strep/prevention/>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/group-b-strep/es/risk-factors/factores-de-riesgo-de-la-enfermedad-por-estreptococos-del-grupo-b.html>]
- **Vaccine Recommendations Before, During, and After Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-pregnancy/recommended-vaccines/index.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Related Issues

- **Flu Vaccine Safety and Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/vaccine-safety/vaccine-pregnant.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Measles, Mumps, Rubella and the MMR Vaccine during Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/measles-mumps-and-rubella-mmr-vaccine/>] (Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/sarampion-papera-rubeola-la-vacuna-mmr/>]
- **Meningococcal Vaccines and Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/meningococcal-disease-bacterial-meningitis-vaccine-pregnancy/>] (Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/vacuna-contr-la-enfermedad-meningococica-meningitis-bacteriana/>]
- **Pregnancy and Vaccination** [<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-pregnancy/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Pregnant Travelers** [<https://www.cdc.gov/yellow-book/hcp/family-travel/pregnant-travelers.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine and Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis-tdap-vaccine-pregnancy/>] (Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)

Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/vacuna-tdap-difteria-tetanos-pertussis/pdf/>]

Specifics


- **5 Things to Know About Zika and Pregnancy** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/5-zika.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/5-zika.html>]
- **About STIs and Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/sti/about/about-stis-and-pregnancy.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/sti/es/about/acerca-de-las-infecciones-de-transmision-sexual-y-el-embarazo.html>]
- **CMV in Newborns** [<https://www.cdc.gov/cytomegalovirus/congenital-infection/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Congenital Zika Syndrome and Other Birth Defects** [<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/czs/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/cytomegalovirus-cmv-pregnancy/pdf/>]
(Organization of Teratology Information Specialists) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/citomegalovirus-cmv/>]
- **Escherichia coli (E. coli) and Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/e-coli-pregnancy/>]
(Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/e-coli/>]
- **Flu and Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/pregnant.htm>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Food Poisoning during Pregnancy** [<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/pregnancy/food-poisoning-during-pregnancy>] (March of Dimes Foundation)
- **Group B Strep Infection** [<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/planning-baby/group-b-strep-infection>]
(March of Dimes Foundation)
- **Listeria Infection (Listeriosis) and Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/listeriosis-pregnancy/>]
(Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/listeriosis/>]
- **Parvovirus B19 in Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/parvovirus-b19/about/parvovirus-b19-in-pregnancy.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **People at Increased Risk for Toxoplasmosis** [<https://www.cdc.gov/toxoplasmosis/risk-factors/>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Respiratory Viruses and Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/risk-factors/pregnancy.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Sexually Transmitted Infections** [<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/pregnancy/sexually-transmitted-infections>] (March of Dimes Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://nacersano.marchofdimes.org/embarazo/infecciones-de-transmision-sexual-durante-el-embarazo.aspx>]
- **Sexually Transmitted Infections, Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding** [<https://womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/stis-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding>] (Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/stis-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding>]
- **Staphylococcus aureus (Staph infection) and Pregnancy** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/staphylococcus-aureus-pregnancy/>] (Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/estafilococo-aureus/pdf/>]
- **Tuberculosis Clinical Care and Treatment during Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/hcp/clinical-care/pregnancy.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Tuberculosis in Pregnancy** [<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/about/pregnancy.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/es/about/el-embarazo.html>]
- **Vibrio** [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/vibrio-pregnancy/>] (Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/informacion-para-mujeres-embarazadas-amamantando-sobre-la-infeccion-del-vibrio/>]
- **Yeast Infection during Pregnancy: Over-the-Counter Treatment OK?** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/vaginitis/expert-answers/yeast-infection-during-pregnancy/FAQ-20058355?p=1>]

(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/vaginitis/expert-answers/yeast-infection-during-pregnancy/faq-20058355?p=1>]

- **Zika Virus: Recommendations for Travelers and People Living Abroad** [<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/travel/>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/es/travel/recomendaciones-para-las-personas-que-viajan-y-las-personas-que-viven-en-el-extranjero.html>]

Clinical Trials


- **ClinicalTrials.gov: Infections and Pregnancy** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=pregnancy+infection+OR+maternal+infection&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- **Article: Prevalence and associated factors for HIV, HBV and syphilis coinfections among...**
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40748946>]
- **Article: Hyperglycemia enhances group B Streptococcus pathogenicity by impairing TLR2 expression and...**
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40746553>]
- **Article: Prevalence of and risk factors for suicidal ideation among perinatal women...**
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40739634>]
- **Infections and Pregnancy -- see more articles** [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Pregnancy+Complications%2C+Infectious%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- **How to Find Find an Ob-Gyn** [<https://www.acog.org/womens-health/find-an-ob-gyn>]
(American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists)
- **March of Dimes Foundation** [<https://www.marchofdimes.org/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://nacersano.marchofdimes.org/>]
- **National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases** [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/>] 

Patient Handouts

- **Group B streptococcal septicemia of the newborn** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001366.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001366.htm>]
- **Group B streptococcus - pregnancy** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000511.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000511.htm>]
- **Pregnancy and the flu** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007443.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007443.htm>]
- **Pregnant Women Need a Flu Shot** [<https://www.cdc.gov/flu-resources/php/resources/infographic-pregnant-women.html>]
Infographic (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Group B streptococcal septicemia of the newborn [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001366.htm>]

Group B streptococcus - pregnancy [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000511.htm>]

Pregnancy and herpes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001368.htm>]

Pregnancy and the flu [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007443.htm>]

Related Health Topics

HIV and Pregnancy [<https://medlineplus.gov/hivandpregnancy.html>]

Pregnancy [<https://medlineplus.gov/pregnancy.html>]

Pregnancy and Medicines [<https://medlineplus.gov/pregnancyandmedicines.html>]

Prenatal Care [<https://medlineplus.gov/prenatalcare.html>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/infectionsandpregnancy.html>]
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