

Important changes to Canadian Immunization in Pregnancy Guideline

Ottawa – March 19, 2018 - The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) has updated its [Immunization in Pregnancy](#) Clinical Practice Guideline and recommends pregnant women receive the seasonal inactivated influenza vaccine and the tetanus toxoid, diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine (Tdap) during their pregnancy.

“Women are at an increased risk of influenza-related hospitalization and serious complications, including death, during pregnancy,” says Dr. Jennifer Blake, CEO, SOGC. “And pertussis is a transmissible respiratory infection which kills about 300,000 infants worldwide every year—most under two months of age. The seasonal influenza and Tdap vaccinations are safe to administer during pregnancy and protect mothers and their fetus before the baby is born, and for the first few months of life, when infants are at the greatest risk of severe disease or death.”

The guideline also urges health care providers to undertake a thorough review of their patient’s overall immunization status to identify other potential risk areas during pregnancy. In some cases they should be offered the hepatitis B, hepatitis A, meningococcal, and/or pneumococcal vaccines for the wellbeing of the mother if they have specific risk factors or exposures.

The new recommendations also suggest women who have inadvertently received vaccination with a live or live-attenuated vaccine during pregnancy should no longer be counselled to terminate the pregnancy. In general, these vaccines are contraindicated in pregnancy. But, to date, there is no evidence to demonstrate harm, so mothers can be reassured that these vaccines will not harm their baby. The products are also safe and acceptable for breastfeeding mothers.

“We believe these additional measures, based on research and the development of new vaccines, should give pregnant women added comfort that they are doing the best they can to help their children avoid these common, yet serious childhood diseases,” adds Dr. Blake.

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About The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

The SOGC is one of Canada’s oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society’s mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information, please visit www.sogc.org