

# PREGNANCY VACCINES

It is important to stay healthy and safe during your pregnancy. A good way to stay healthy is to keep current on your vaccines (shots). Vaccines help protect you and your baby against diseases. When you get a vaccine, your body will create antibodies that help fight viruses and bacteria. Some of these antibodies will pass to your baby before birth and will provide short-term, early protection. Anyone who is around your baby and needs vaccines should get them at least two weeks before meeting the baby. It takes about two weeks to build antibodies after vaccination. Some needed vaccines are:

- **Whooping Cough**

Also called Pertussis, is a serious illness of the lungs. It is caused by bacteria that is spread from person to person in the air. You should get the whooping cough vaccine (Tdap) in your 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester. The 27th week is the start of your third trimester and the best time to get your Tdap. If you get the Tdap between the 27th and 36th week of pregnancy the most protective antibodies can be passed to your baby before birth.

- **The Flu**

A respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that can get into the nose, throat and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness. Protect yourself before flu season by getting your flu shot by October. Those who are pregnant should **not** get the nose spray flu vaccine (Live attenuated influenza vaccine-LAIV). During pregnancy, there are changes to your immune system, heart and lungs. These changes make it more likely that you will get very sick from the flu. If you get the flu shot, you are less likely to need to go to the hospital or have problems with your pregnancy.



- **Covid-19**

Also known as Coronavirus disease 2019 is caused by SARS-CoV-2. It is part of the coronavirus family. Like other respiratory viruses, coronaviruses spread quickly. The COVID-19 vaccine doesn't have a live virus and can't give you COVID-19. People who get vaccinated are less likely to get sick or go to the hospital. You can get the COVID-19 vaccine at any point during your pregnancy.

If you have questions please contact **MotherToBaby at 1-866-626-6847** or visit **MotherToBaby.org**. Their experts can answer your questions in English and Spanish, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm.

*Adapted from: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases*

**If you need this information in your language or in a different format, call L.A. Care Health Plan. The number is on the back of your card.**