

VACCINES

and pre-existing conditions



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Will the COVID-19 vaccine impact people with any pre-existing conditions?

The vaccine has been found to be safe and effective in people with various conditions that are associated with increased risk of severe disease. This includes hypertension, diabetes, asthma, pulmonary, liver or kidney disease, as well as chronic infections that are stable and controlled.

Should you get the COVID-19 vaccine if you are pregnant or planning to have a baby in the future?

- There is currently no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccination impacts negatively on pregnancy. In addition, there is no evidence that the vaccine creates fertility problems.
- You can be safely vaccinated even if you are trying to become pregnant now or want to get pregnant in the future.



It is said that the objective of a mass immunisation campaign is to create herd immunity. What is this, and how does it work?

- The WHO uses the term 'population immunity' as the formal description of 'herd immunity'.
- Herd immunity refers to the indirect protection from an infectious disease that occurs when enough people become immune either through vaccination or immunity developed through a previous infection.
- Vaccinated people are protected from getting the virus and passing it on. The more people who are vaccinated, the more difficult it is for the virus to move from one person to another.
- To safely achieve herd immunity against COVID-19, a substantial part of a population has to be vaccinated.
- One of the aims of working towards herd immunity is to keep people at risk who cannot get vaccinated (e.g. health conditions) safe and protected.
- The percentage of people who need to be immune to achieve herd immunity varies. Herd immunity against measles requires about 95% of a population to be vaccinated. The remaining 5% will be protected because measles will not spread among those who are vaccinated. For polio, the threshold is about 80%. The percentage of the population that must be immunised against COVID-19 to begin inducing herd immunity is not yet known.