

Summary of COVID-19 Vaccine Use During Lactation

Several vaccines against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, are being developed; however, none have been studied during breastfeeding. The first two vaccines to become available in the US are messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines. They are not live vaccines and are not expected to be appreciably excreted into breastmilk or absorbed by the infant. No non-live vaccines have ever been reported to cause infant adverse effects via breastfeeding. Professional organizations have recommended that these COVID-19 vaccines be offered to those who are breastfeeding because the potential benefits of maternal vaccination during lactation outweigh any theoretical risks. Given the current absence of direct evidence of vaccine safety during breastfeeding, clinicians are encouraged to undertake shared decision making with their patients, based on local community risk and the patient's risk factors.

Theoretical concerns regarding the safety of vaccinating lactating individuals do not outweigh the potential benefits of receiving the vaccine. There is no need to avoid initiation or discontinue breastfeeding in patients who receive a COVID-19 vaccine (ABM 2020)

Resources:

Drugs and Lactation Database (LactMed) [Internet]. Revision 1/18/2021

ACOG Clinical (The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Updated 12/21/2020