Vaccination Hesitancy Increasing Among Pregnant Women

More pregnant women in the US were hesitant to receive common vaccinations in 2022 to 2023 compared with 2021 to 2022, researchers reported in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Women who reported being “very hesitant” to receive the influenza vaccine increased from 17% to 25% during that period, while hesitancy to receive the tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid, and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine rose from 15% to 20%, according to survey data from 1814 pregnant women aged 18 to 49 years.

Pregnant women who receive these vaccines, as well as COVID-19 vaccines, can reduce their own risk of infection as well as that of their children, the researchers noted.

Around half of respondents stated they had been vaccinated against influenza and pertussis, tetanus, and diphtheria before or during their pregnancy, but only about a fourth had received a COVID-19 bivalent booster dose.

Pregnant women whose clinicians recommended that they get vaccinated were less hesitant, so the researchers suggested that encouragement by clinicians as well as informative conversations with patients to address vaccine hesitancy “could reduce adverse maternal and infant illness and death from vaccine-preventable diseases.”

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Published Online: October 18, 2023.

Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.