

TO: EZIZ Users
FROM: CDPH
SUBJECT: Pregnant Women Need Protection from Flu
DATE: 1/31/14

Dear EZIZ Users:

Pregnant women are recommended to get a flu shot during **any stage** of pregnancy. If you treat pregnant women in your practice or if your patient's mother is pregnant, please urge them to get vaccinated against flu as soon as possible. Flu is widespread in California, and pregnant women are more severely affected by flu than the general population.^{1,2} Flu is **5 times** more likely to cause severe illness in pregnant women than in women who are not pregnant.² Changes in the immune system, heart, and lungs during pregnancy make pregnant women more prone to severe illness from influenza.

Below are **3** reasons pregnant women should get vaccinated against the flu:

1. Flu vaccines **are safe** for pregnant women and their babies.^{1,2} Millions of pregnant women have received flu shots over the last decade, and the vaccination has not been shown to cause harm to women or their infants.
2. Flu shots during pregnancy also **protect her newborn**.^{1,2,3} Vaccination during pregnancy has been shown to protect both the mother and her infant from flu illness, flu hospitalizations, and flu-related preterm labor. Some of the protection mothers receive from flu shots passes to their babies during pregnancy, thereby helping protect them until they're old enough to get flu shots at 6 months of age.
3. Pregnant women with flu have a **greater chance for serious problems** for their unborn babies, including premature labor and delivery.^{1,2}

References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/pregnant.htm>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/nivw/influenza-pregnancy-letter.pdf>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Concerns/pregnancy_influenza.html