



health

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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TO:

**HEADS OF PROVINCIAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS  
HEADS OF PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES  
DISTRICT AND PHC MANAGERS  
COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAMME MANAGERS  
COVID-19 VACCINATION SITE MANAGERS  
COVID-19 VACCINATORS**

**VACCINATION OF PREGNANT AND BREASTFEEDING WOMEN**

Although pregnant women are at no greater risk of being infected by SARS-CoV-2, the woman and her infant are more likely to develop complications from COVID-19. Pregnant and lactating women were excluded from initial COVID-19 vaccine trials; thus, data to guide vaccine decision-making are lacking. Clinical trials evaluating the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy are now underway, and further trials are planned. The Vaccine Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) is continuously reviewing vaccine safety in pregnancy for all vaccines included in, or considered for inclusion, in the national vaccine rollout.

Based on the above, it is currently recommended that:

1. COVID-19 vaccines including the Comirnaty® (Pfizer) vaccine and the Janssen® (J&J) vaccine should be offered to all pregnant and breastfeeding women who are eligible to be vaccinated and who have completed 14 weeks of gestation.
2. Health care workers are encouraged to discuss the benefits and possible risks of COVID-19 vaccination with their patients. These discussions should include the fact that safety data for the vaccines in pregnancy and breastfeeding women are currently inadequate, as well as the strong immune response conferred to mothers following vaccination and the benefits of immune transfer to the baby. Furthermore, that there are no known risks associated with other non-live vaccines given routinely to pregnant women.
3. Non-pregnant women contemplating pregnancy are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated as soon as they are eligible to do so.

Regards

**DR N CRISP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE  
DATE: 21/06/25**