

The Virgin Islands Consortium

World Health Organization Says Pregnant Women Should Not Take Moderna, Pfizer Covid-19 Vaccines

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The World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday issued a guidance advising pregnant women not to take the Covid-19 vaccines, except in instances where a woman is at high risk of exposure or has a severe case of the virulent disease.

“In the interim, WHO recommends not to use mRNA-1273 in pregnancy, unless the benefit of vaccinating a pregnant woman outweighs the potential vaccine risks, such as in health workers at high risk of exposure and pregnant women with co-morbidities placing them in a high-risk group for severe Covid-19,” said the WHO in its guidance. The worldwide health agency said its recommendations would be updated as more data become available.

The recommendation includes vaccines made from Moderna and Pfizer, the only two Covid-19 vaccines approved for use in the United States. The WHO does not recommend pregnancy testing prior to vaccination, and the agency also does not recommend delaying pregnancy following vaccination.

Women who are lactating can be vaccinated, said the WHO, stating that the vaccine is unlikely to pose a risk to children who are breastfeeding.

The WHO said while Covid-19 mRNA vaccines aren't made from live virus as mRNA doesn't itself enter the cell nucleus and is degraded quickly, sufficient data have yet to be collected on actual pregnant people to determine the vaccines' risks or effectiveness in pregnancy.

Neither Pfizer nor Moderna enrolled pregnant women in their vaccine trials, which recruited roughly 40,000 subjects respectively. Moderna has said it plans to create a registry to monitor and document pregnant outcomes in mothers and infants, while Pfizer plans a maternal vaccine study in the future.

According to the WHO, developmental and reproductive toxicology studies in animals using mRNA, also called RNA, haven't shown any harmful effects.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [said](#) pregnant women may take the vaccines if they wish, though it added that a conversation with the patient's healthcare provider can be beneficial.