

Dear AOC patients and family,

As you may have heard, the Ministry of health and the Royal Australasian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology have updated their messages around vaccination against COVID-19 in pregnancy. At the start of the COVID-19 vaccine roll out, recommendations for pregnant women were made in the setting of almost no clinical or safety data as pregnant women were excluded from COVID-19 vaccine trials.

There is now increasing evidence that pregnant women may have worse outcomes after infection with SARS-CoV2.

More data is now available from overseas about the safety of vaccination against COVID-19. It is also apparent that information from formal randomised trials is unlikely to be available for some time.

The Ministry are now encouraging pregnant women to get the COVID-19 vaccination as part of the Group 3 rollout, at any stage of their pregnancy.

They have expressed concern that with borders increasingly opening, the community risk of SARS-Cov-2 exposure and infection could suddenly change.

The statement from RANZCOG reads, "RANZCOG recommends that pregnant women are routinely offered Pfizer mRNA vaccine (Cominarty) at any stage of pregnancy. This is because the risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 is significantly higher for pregnant women and their unborn baby. Global surveillance data from large numbers of pregnant women have not identified any significant safety concerns with mRNA COVID-19 vaccines given at any stage of pregnancy. Furthermore, there is also evidence of antibody in cord blood and breastmilk, which may offer protection to infants through passive immunity. Pregnant women are encouraged to discuss the decision in relation to timing of vaccination with their health professional. Women who are trying to become pregnant do not need to delay vaccination or avoid becoming pregnant after vaccination."

We were aware with the rapidly changing nature of the Pandemic and local community outbreaks across Australia and the Pacific that advice regarding the vaccine may alter at any time.

Please be reassured we will continue to provide updated advice as it becomes available. For further information visit covid.immune.org.nz/resources/written/covid-19-vaccination-pregnancy-and-lactation-fact-sheet