

BREASTFEEDING & THE COVID-19 VACCINE

Please note that the leaflet sent to all homes in Scotland 'The covid-19 vaccine: Important Information' from Public Health Scotland has a paragraph regarding breastfeeding on page 8 that is now **out of date** and should be replaced with the information below:

The following information is from the latest guidance regarding the COVID-19 vaccines & breastfeeding. To read each article in full please click the headings.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON VACCINATION & IMMUNISATION

JCVI now advises that breastfeeding women can receive these vaccines.

Breastfeeding women should therefore be offered vaccination if they are eligible, for example if they are a frontline health or social care worker or have underlying conditions that puts them at a very high risk of being infected with, transmitting or experiencing serious complications of Covid-19.

INFANT RISK ADVICE

As for breastfeeding, little or none of these vaccine components would ever reach the milk compartment, or even be transferred into human milk. Even if they were, they would simply be digested like any other protein by the infant. It is our opinion, that the present group of vaccines are probably going to be quite safe for breastfeeding mothers. The infant may even gain a small amount of maternal IgG in the breastmilk, which may even be beneficial.

UNICEF BABY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE

Can mothers receive a COVID-19 vaccine while breastfeeding?

The Oxford University/AstraZeneca and the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines are now in wide circulation for use in the UK. Updated guidance from The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) now advises that breastfeeding women can receive these vaccines.

BMJ OPINION 5th January 2021

The US approach to the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has been quite different. Recommendations from The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), approved by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), conclude that breastfeeding women may choose to receive the vaccine. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) released a Practice Advisory and its message is clear: "vaccines should not be withheld from lactating individuals who otherwise meet criteria for vaccination".

BREASTFEEDING NETWORK

6th January 2021

Breastfeeding mothers have been informed that they can have the vaccination and continue to breastfeed as normal.

GOV.UK

31st December 2020

Women of childbearing age, currently pregnant or breastfeeding leaflet.

NHS INFORM

There are no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in breastfeeding or on the breastfed infant. Despite this, COVID-19 vaccines are not thought to be a risk to the breastfeeding infant, and the benefits of breastfeeding are well known. Because of this, the JCVI has recommended that the vaccine can be received while breastfeeding. This is in line with recommendations in the USA and from the World Health Organization.