Are vaccines safe during pregnancy?
Vaccines, like any other medication, can have side effects. Most reactions are mild, short lasting and do not require special treatment.

Whooping cough and flu vaccinations are recommended during pregnancy with good evidence of safety and effectiveness.

If you would like further information about possible side effects following immunisation, speak to your doctor or immunisation provider or call the Immunisation Section, SA Health on 1300 232 272.

For further advice please speak to your midwife, doctor or immunisation provider about immunisations during pregnancy.

Available at:
The Influenza Specialist Group
Available at:

For more information
Immunisation Section SA Health
PO Box 6 Rundle Mall
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: 1300 232 272
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation

If you require this information in an alternative language or format please contact SA Health on the details provided below and they will make every effort to assist you.
Flu (influenza): Why should I have the flu vaccine in pregnancy?
When you are pregnant, your immune system is naturally suppressed, or weakened, which puts pregnant women at a greater risk of getting the flu. Pregnant women are more likely to become seriously ill or die from complications of the flu than the general population.

Protecting the baby and mother:
The flu vaccine will protect you during the pregnancy and can protect you and your baby for some months after the baby is born, depending on how many weeks into the pregnancy it was given.

How long will my baby be protected?
Pregnant women who have the flu vaccine in the second or third trimester develop and pass on protective antibodies through the placenta and breast milk. This means your baby will get some protection from the flu in the first six months of life until they are old enough to have the flu vaccine.

When should I get the vaccine?
Flu vaccine is very safe and can be given at any time during pregnancy.

Where can I get the flu vaccine?
The flu vaccine is free for pregnant women. Speak to your midwife, doctor* or immunisation provider.

*Your doctor may charge a consultation fee.

Who else should have the flu vaccine?
The flu vaccine is recommended for anyone from six months of age who wishes to be protected against the flu, especially those around young babies. This includes dads, other children and grandparents.

Whooping cough (pertussis):
Why should I have the whooping cough vaccine in pregnancy?
Whooping cough is a highly contagious disease. Babies who are too young to start their immunisations are particularly at risk of this serious disease. Babies less than six months of age who get the disease are likely to be hospitalised and can die from whooping cough.

Protecting the baby and mother:
By having the whooping cough vaccine in your third trimester you will develop protective antibodies which are passed through the placenta to your baby. This means your newborn will be protected against whooping cough in the early months of life before the routine childhood immunisations are started.

How long will my baby be protected?
Your baby will get some protection from whooping cough until at least six weeks of age when they can have their first immunisations.

What is the best time for me to be vaccinated?
The best time for the whooping cough vaccine to be given is during 28 to 32 weeks of pregnancy, but can be given at any time during the third trimester.