

Information for Patients about COVID-19 during Pregnancy

The following information is provided to inform couples who are planning to proceed with fertility treatment at this time about the possible risks to their or their baby's health from SARS-CoV-2. We are providing this information because we cannot be certain that infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the virus causing COVID-19 disease) in pregnancy is harmless to pregnant women or unborn babies.

COVID-19 was declared a Global Pandemic by the WHO on the 11th March 2020. COVID-19 is a new virus that was only identified in December 2019 and therefore your caregivers are unable to confirm that there is no increased risk to yourself or your baby if you develop COVID-19 infection in pregnancy. The following is a summary of current knowledge about COVID-19 infection in pregnancy.

- Pregnant women should be considered a vulnerable or at-risk group.
- We do not know the impact of infection on pregnant women. We do know from recent influenza and SARS epidemics that women can have an increased risk of severe complications to viral respiratory infections due to the normal changes in a woman's body during pregnancy. These changes include reduced lung function, increased cardiac output, increased oxygen consumption and changes to the immune system. We do not have evidence to suggest this is true for COVID-19 disease at this stage. It seems that pregnant women probably have a similar risk to non-pregnant women of infection and of severe disease.
- There is no evidence that COVID-19 increases the risk of miscarriage.
- There is very little evidence to suggest that the virus can cross the placenta from Mum to baby. But it is early data and has not been scientifically confirmed. The babies that were exposed to COVID-19 late in pregnancy appear not to have any abnormalities and are healthy.
- There is no data yet on the effects of COVID-19 during the first trimester of pregnancy as the virus has not been around for 9 months yet to know the outcome of these pregnancies.

Please refer to the following websites for further information:

[The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#)

[The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#)

[The Fertility Society of Australia](#)