



## **WOMEN IN REPRODUCTIVE AGE GROUP – COVID 19 INFECTION, VACCINATION & THE MYTHS**

### **A step towards sensitisation, awareness, to allay their Apprehensions & Anxiety**

- The COVID – 19 Vaccination has been expanded to include all citizens from 18 years of age onwards, making more than 69% of population eligible, of which **nearly half (48%) are women.**
- **Experts are of the view that the benefits of Vaccination to the pregnant women outweigh its potential risks.**
- **If a pregnant woman gets infected with the virus, 90% of them recover without any need for hospitalisation while a rapid deterioration in health occurs in few.**
- **Pre-existing co-morbidities – Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Advance Maternal age (over 35 years) & high body mass index (obesity) are predisposing factors for severe COVID-19 in pregnancy** requiring hospitalisation/intensive care or result in death compared to non pregnant women.
- Pregnant women with COVID-19 infection are at increased risk of the **Preterm Birth, Low Birth Weight (less than 2.5 kg) & higher chances of Neonatal Morbidity.**
- **A pregnant woman who opt for vaccination, could be vaccinated as per the schedule at any time of the pregnancy.**
- In case a woman has been infected with COVID-19 infection during the current pregnancy, **then she should be vaccinated soon after the delivery.**
- COVID-19 vaccines available are safe & vaccination protects pregnant women against COVID-19 illness/disease like other individuals.
- Like any medicine a vaccine may have side effects which are normally mild – Mild Fever, Pain at injection site or feel unwell for 1-3 days.
- **“WHO” does not recommend pregnancy testing prior to vaccination & delaying pregnancy or terminating pregnancy because of vaccination.**
- **The American College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists (ACOG) States that Pregnancy Testing should not be required prior to receiving vaccine & vaccine may be administered to the women who may consider future pregnancy.**
- **Radiological Investigation (Chest X-Ray/CT Chest),** should be performed when indicated & not delayed due to fetal concerns. Abdominal shielding can be used to protect the fetus as per normal protocol.
- **“WHO” advice is that Caesarean sections should only be performed when Medically justified (obstetric indications).**
- At present, no recorded cases of breast milk being tested positive for COVID-19.
- COVID-19 mother who intend to breast feed can do so safely with good **Respiratory Hygiene** – put on a Face Mask, Face Shield & practice hand hygiene before each feed & or during temporary separation, should be encouraged to express her breast milk using breast pump for feeding, **breast milk do not transmit COVID-19.**

### **CARRY HOME MESSAGE – FOR PREGNANT & TO BE PREGNANT**

- COVID-19 Vaccines available are safe & vaccination protects pregnant women against COVID-19 illness or disease.
- You cannot get COVID-19 infection due to vaccination but do get the protection.
- The vaccine does not affect the fertility, nor have any implication for getting pregnant or having a healthy pregnancy.
- **The pregnant woman & her family members to continue to practise COVID Appropriate Behaviour :** Wearing Mask, Frequent Hand washing, Maintaining Physical Distance & Avoiding Crowded areas, **as protection following COVID-19 Vaccination is not Absolute – Still Carry the Risk -** so the COVID Appropriate Behaviour must be continued.

Sd/

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**“Get Vaccinated, Be Protected & Continue COVID Appropriate Behaviour”.**