

Table 2. Lactation Categories and Examples

	Code	Description	Examples <sup>1</sup>	Specifications
1	Recommended for some or all	<p><b>Explicit recommendation</b> that <i>some or all</i> lactating people SHOULD RECEIVE vaccination /be vaccinated.</p> <p>[if language uses “should be offered” – must assess context and should be reviewed by PIs]</p>	<p><b>WHO (01/08/21):</b>            “Breastfeeding offers substantial health benefits to lactating women and their breastfed children. Vaccine effectiveness is expected to be similar in lactating women as in other adults. Data are not available on the potential benefits and risks of the vaccine to breastfed children. However, as the COVID-19 vaccine BIBP is not a live virus vaccine, it is biologically and clinically unlikely to pose a risk to the breastfeeding child. On the basis of these considerations, WHO recommends the use of the COVID-19 vaccine BIBP in lactating women as in other adults. WHO does not recommend discontinuing breastfeeding because of vaccination.”</p> <p><b>South Korea (no date):</b>            “I am breastfeeding. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccination?            There is still no data on the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine for nursing mothers and their breastfeeding infants. However, in order to obtain immunity from COVID-19 infection, if the nursing mother is the target of the vaccination, it is recommended that the nursing mother be vaccinated against COVID-19.”</p> <p><b>Uruguay (22/02/21):</b>            “Can I get vaccinated if I am breastfeeding? Breastfeeding is not a contraindication to vaccination. Vaccination of the mother against COVID-19 is considered safe for the woman herself, for breastfeeding, as well as for the infant. In women who are breastfeeding, if they are part of a group at high risk of infection (for example, health workers with high exposure) or high risk of complications (for example, previous diseases) vaccination is recommended or because of her essential role for the country (for example policemen, teachers, etc.). It is not recommended to stop breastfeeding after vaccination.”</p>	<p>Specifications indicate groups explicitly recommended for vaccination access/offering:</p> <p>Can be:            Elevated exposure            Elevated risk of severe disease</p>
2	Permitted	All pregnant people CAN receive, MAY receive, or CAN CHOOSE. Also may say “pregnant people can be offered vaccine”	<p><b>United States (03/05/21):</b>            “The COVID-19 vaccines authorized now are non-replicating vaccines, meaning they are able to create an immune response but do not reproduce inside host cells. Because non-replicating vaccines pose no risk for lactating people or their infants, COVID-19 vaccines are also</p>	Specifications indicate groups emphasized for vaccination. All are permitted to receive vaccine, but specifications correspond to groups where

		<p>There may be a general statement about risks and benefits, including a note to discuss risks and benefits or a general note about offering vaccine whenever benefits outweigh risks. Some in this category may also offer examples of specific groups <b>where/when</b> the benefit is likely to be great than risk, without limiting the offer of vaccine to those groups. So if says <b>“if /when</b> benefit outweighs risk e.g. in X, Y categories” or “such as in X, Y categories” that would be a 2 – if there is an <b>“only if”</b> it becomes a 3.</p>	<p>thought to not be a risk to the breastfeeding infant. Therefore, lactating people may choose to be vaccinated.”</p> <p><b>Mexico (05/11/21):</b>  “Breastfeeding  Considering that the AZ1222 AstraZeneca vaccine against COVID-19:  • Does not contain replicating viruses in its composition  • That the WHO has recommended maintaining breastfeeding even in the cases in which the mother has an active clinical picture of COVID-19  • That breastfeeding is essential for healthy physical development and emotional health of infants and for skin-to-skin contact with their mother, for the benefit of the mother-child binomial.  It is emphasized that breastfeeding women can be vaccinated and it is not recommended to suspend breastfeeding neither before nor after this biological is applied.”</p> <p><b>Colombia (02/15/21):</b>  “Lactation: The efficacy of the vaccine is expected to be similar in lactating women as in other adults. However, there are no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in lactating women or on the effects of mRNA vaccines in breastfed children. As the BNT162b2 vaccine is not a live virus vaccine and the mRNA does not enter the nucleus of the cell and rapidly degrades the cytoplasm of the cells, it is biologically and clinically unlikely to pose a risk to the nursing child. Based on these considerations, a lactating woman who is part of a recommended group for vaccination, e.g. health workers should be offered vaccination weighing risk benefit. WHO recommends continuing breastfeeding after vaccination”</p>	<p>the benefit-risk ratio may more strongly favor vaccination (or strong suggestion that certain groups be offered vaccination)  Can be:  Elevated exposure  Elevated risk of severe disease</p>
3	Permitted with qualifications	<p>Certain groups of pregnant people, e.g., pregnant health workers, pregnant people with underlying conditions, CAN, MAY, CAN CHOOSE to receive, or SHOULD BE OFFERED.  OR Vaccination of these groups SHOULD BE</p>	<p><b>Namibia (02/15/21):</b>  “Are you currently breastfeeding?  If YES: Please ask the patient whether they discussed vaccination with a medical provider. Patients who are lactating may choose to be vaccinated if they feel they are at risk after providing evidence of approval from a medical provider.”</p> <p><b>Singapore (02/23/21):</b>  “Tell your doctor or nurse about your medical conditions before getting this vaccine for further advice if you:</p>	<p>Qualifications indicate the groups for whom the vaccine is permitted:  Elevated exposure  Elevated risk of severe disease</p> <p>OR other qualifiers on access  Prescription required  Provider consultation</p>

		<p>CONSIDERED. OR Vaccination of pregnant people is permitted IF there is an extra process involved as a gatekeeper step, such as having a prescription, provider consultation, or special consent procedure. OR Vaccination should be offered after 1<sup>st</sup> trimester or only in 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester. OR includes “only if” or “only when”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are pregnant, planning pregnancy or breastfeeding</li> <li>• are immunocompromised, or taking treatment that affects your immune system</li> <li>• have active or recent treatment for cancer, organ or stem cell transplantation</li> <li>• have any allergies, fever, bleeding disorders, or taking blood thinning medicines</li> <li>• have COVID-19 infection before, or received another COVID-19 Vaccine</li> </ul> <p>Many of the above conditions do not mean you cannot be vaccinated. The doctor or nurse will decide if you can proceed to get the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine.”</p> <p><b>Spain (02/12/21):</b> “There are also no data on the possible effects of the vaccine during breastfeeding (neither on milk production nor on the infant), although taking into account the type of vaccines currently authorized ( Comirnaty, from Pfizer / BioNTech , the vaccine against COVID- 19 of Moderna , the vaccine against the new coronavirus from AstraZeneca and Janssen ) is not considered to pose a risk to the infant, so in the case of breastfeeding women who have a high risk of exposure or high risk of complications, vaccination can be assessed on an individual basis. It would not be necessary to suspend breastfeeding for the days after vaccination.”</p>	<p>required/ special consent</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Not recommended but with exceptions</p>	<p>Must contain sentence or clause stating generally not recommended, systematic vaccination in pregnancy/lactation not recommended, then provide exceptions.</p> <p>In some cases, the framing or placement may imply that vaccination is not recommended, such as including text in the “contraindications” section.</p>	<p><b>Bangladesh (no date):</b> “Covid vaccine cannot be given to any person other than the target population of the registered / included in the line listing. Pregnant mothers and lactating mothers, under 18 years of age, sick and hospitalized, need to request a vaccination from the designated immunization center as advised by the doctor. Vaccination cannot be done against the will of the person.”</p> <p><b>Bhutan (03/03/21):</b> “Who should postpone the vaccination? Pregnant and breastfeeding women, EXCEPT pregnant and breastfeeding women who are frontline workers and pregnant and breastfeeding women with comorbidities.”</p>	<p>Qualifications indicate the groups for whom the vaccine is permitted: Elevated exposure Elevated risk of severe disease</p> <p>OR other qualifiers on access Prescription required Provider consultation required/special consent</p>

		When pregnant people are listed under contraindications with language that allows exceptions based on risk/benefit assessment, it is a 4.	<p><b>Denmark (06/07/21):</b>          “You are pregnant or breastfeeding (in exceptional cases, you may get vaccinated, but you should talk to your doctor).          ...          3. Can I get vaccinated if I am pregnant?          I am pregnant/breastfeeding          If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you should not be vaccinated, except in exceptional circumstances - for example, if you suffer from severe illness.”</p>	
<b>5</b>	Not recommended	Vaccination of pregnant women is not allowed, not possible, contraindicated, prohibited.	<p><b>Pakistan (04/01/21):</b>          “Breastfeeding          • It is unknown whether Sputnik V is excreted in human milk. It should be avoided”</p> <p><b>Chile (01/15/21):</b>          “Although inactivated vaccines are not contraindicated in the pregnancy, and no toxicity or teratogenicity was observed in models animals. CoronaVac should not be used in pregnant women, or while breastfeeding, as there is a lack of studies to support its safety in this population.”</p> <p><b>Algeria (01/15/21):</b>          “The contraindications to vaccination against COVID-19 are:          - Pregnancy and breastfeeding due to lack of data at present”</p>	No qualifiers should apply to this category
<b>6</b>	No position found	Either pregnancy not mentioned at all, or pregnancy-related text does not include a position – these are “punts”. E.g., “Please consult your doctor” does not indicate whether vaccination in pregnancy is permitted or prohibited by this policy.	<p><b>Germany (03/30/21):</b>          “No data are available on vaccination during breastfeeding. However, STIKO believes it is extremely unlikely that vaccination of the mother while breastfeeding poses a risk to the infant.”</p> <p><b>Suriname (no date):</b>          “I am breastfeeding, can I get vaccinated?          No harmful effects have been observed in the nursing child to date.”</p> <p><b>Montenegro (no date):</b>          “Breastfeeding is certainly an important part of this process, but vaccination very rarely has negative effects in this regard. Although data on the effect of the COVID-19 vaccine on breast-feeding are not yet</p>	No qualifiers should apply to this category

			available, mRNA vaccines are not considered a risk to infants.”	
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<sup>1</sup>These examples do not necessarily represent the country's current position.