'Opting for what feels safe rather than what is safe': Why are many pregnant women brushing off advice to get COVID vaccines?

At least 200 [pregnant people](#) have died of COVID-19, including 22 in August alone; nearly 23,000 have been hospitalized. Newborns are suffering too. [The American Academy of Pediatrics](#) has reported links between infection during pregnancy and preterm birth, and according to the CDC, babies born to patients with COVID-19 are at [increased risk of admission](#) to the neonatal intensive-care unit.

So why aren't more expectant mothers getting shots that could be lifesaving for both them and their future children? Many assume that all unvaccinated people are conspiracy-minded anti-vaxxers, but as [my colleague Ed Yong has written](#), the reasons for not getting COVID-19 shots are more complicated than that. Pregnancy adds another layer of complexity.

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The vaccine-skeptical women I spoke with told me that they believe the pandemic is real and that they are pro-science, but they were also overwhelmingly concerned about their own and their baby's safety because of what they saw as a dearth of research on long-term outcomes.

Given the high stakes of protecting their unborn child, and amid an often confusing information landscape, many opted for [what felt safe, rather than what *was* safe](#).

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)