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## The risk of miscarriage following COVID-19 vaccination: a systematic review and meta-analysis

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### **The risk of miscarriage following COVID-19 vaccination: a systematic review and meta-analysis**

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1 **The risk of miscarriage following COVID-19 vaccination: a systematic review and**  
2 **meta-analysis**

3

4 **Running title:** Miscarriage risk following COVID-19 vaccination

5

6 Michael P Rimmer<sup>†1</sup>, Jhia J Teh<sup>† 2</sup>, Scott C Mackenzie <sup>1</sup>, Bassel H Al Wattar <sup>3</sup>

7

8 <sup>†</sup> Both authors contributed equally to this work.

9

10 1. Medical Research Council Centre for Reproductive Health, Queens Medical Research  
11 Institute, Edinburgh BioQuarter, University of Edinburgh, UK.

12 2. Department of Medicine, Imperial College London, London, UK.

13 3. Reproductive Medicine Unit, University College London Hospitals, London, UK.

14

15 **Correspondence:** Michael Rimmer, MRC Centre for Reproductive Health, University of Edinburgh

16 .

17

18 Michael P Rimmer ORCID: 0000-0002-3295-8753

19 Jhia J Teh ORCID: 000-0002-7086-0546

20 Scott C Mackenzie ORCID: 0000-0001-5823-4334

21 Bassel H Al Wattar ORCID: 0000-0001-8287-9271

22

23

24

25

26 **Abstract**

27 **Study question:** What is the risk of miscarriage among pregnant women who received any of  
28 the COVID-19 vaccines?

29 **Summary answer:** There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines are associated with an  
30 increased risk of miscarriage.

31 **What is known already:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the mass roll-out of  
32 vaccines helped to boost herd immunity and reduced hospital admissions, morbidity and  
33 mortality. Still, many were concerned about the safety of vaccines for pregnancy, which may  
34 have limited their uptake among pregnant women and those planning a pregnancy.

35 **Study design, size, duration:** For this systematic review and meta-analysis, we searched  
36 MEDLINE, EMBASE and Cochrane CENTRAL from inception until June 2022 using a  
37 combination of keywords and MeSH terms.

38 **Participants/materials, setting, methods:** We included observational and interventional  
39 studies that enrolled pregnant women and evaluated any of the available COVID-19 vaccines  
40 compared to placebo or no vaccination. We primarily reported on miscarriage in addition to  
41 ongoing pregnancy and/or live birth.

42 **Main results and the role of chance:** We included data from 21 studies (5 randomised trials  
43 and 16 observational studies) reporting on 149,685 women. The pooled rate of miscarriage  
44 among women who received a COVID-19 vaccine was 9% (n=147,49/123,185, 95%CI 0.05-  
45 0.14). Compared to those who received a placebo or no vaccination, women who received a  
46 COVID-19 vaccine did not have a higher risk of miscarriage (RR 1.07, 95%CI 0.89-1.28, I<sup>2</sup>  
47 35.8%) and had comparable rates for ongoing pregnancy or live birth (RR 1.00, 95%CI 0.97-  
48 1.03, I<sup>2</sup> 10.72%).

49 **Limitations, reasons for caution:** Our analysis was limited to observational evidence with  
50 varied reporting, high heterogeneity and risk of bias across included studies, which may limit  
51 the generalisability and confidence in our findings.

52 **Wider implications of the findings:** COVID-19 vaccines are not associated with an increase  
53 in the risk of miscarriage or reduced rates of ongoing pregnancy or live birth among women  
54 of reproductive age. The current evidence remains limited and larger population studies are  
55 needed to further evaluate the effectiveness and safety of COVID-19 in pregnancy.

56

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60 Health Research in the UK. All authors declare no conflict of interest.

61

62 **Registration number:** CRD42021289098.

63

64 **Keywords:** COVID-19 vaccination, vaccine safety, miscarriage, pregnancy loss, live birth.

65

66

## 67 **Introduction**

68

69 The last two years saw the mass rollout of multi-national vaccination campaigns for the SARS-  
70 CoV-2 (COVID-19) virus with the hope of attenuating its devastating effect on society and  
71 restoring normality (de Gier *et al.*, 2021; Lopez Bernal *et al.*, 2021). The rapid development  
72 and rollout of these vaccines raised concerns about their short and long-term health side effects  
73 leading to vaccine hesitancy among pregnant women and those planning a pregnancy (Egloff  
74 *et al.*, 2022; Kiefer *et al.*, 2022). However, to date, most studies and regulatory bodies support  
75 their safety and effectiveness (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2022;  
76 Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, 2022; UK Health Security Agency., 2022).  
77 Most early studies evaluating the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines excluded pregnant women,  
78 which limited evidence synthesis on the safety of vaccines in pregnancy (Baden *et al.*, 2021;  
79 Madhi *et al.*, 2021; Polack *et al.*, 2020; Sadoff *et al.*, 2021). The majority of health authorities  
80 currently support the safety of COVID-19 vaccination in pregnant women (American College  
81 of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2022; Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists,  
82 2022) to reduce the risk of poor pregnancy outcomes observed in unvaccinated women with  
83 COVID-19 infection (Stock *et al.*, 2022).

84

85 Some authors have raised concerns about the potential cross-reactivity of SARS-CoV-2 spike  
86 protein antibodies following mRNA vaccination with human syncytin-1 protein in  
87 trophoblastic tissue (Ciapponi *et al.*, 2021; Mattar *et al.*, 2021; Schaler *et al.*, 2021; Shanes *et*  
88 *al.*, 2021). Autoreactive antibodies against syncytin-1 were presumed to cause placental  
89 damage and early pregnancy loss due to the potential homology with the SARS-CoV-2 spike  
90 protein. However, further characterisation of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein structure and  
91 amino acid sequencing showed low homology with syncytin-1, disproving claims of cross-

92 reactivity and potential damage to placental tissue (Gong *et al.*, 2005; Kloc *et al.*, 2021; Prasad  
93 *et al.*, 2021). Given the increased risk of morbidity and mortality among pregnant women with  
94 COVID-19, it is critical to maximise prevention efforts by encouraging vaccine uptake and  
95 promoting its safety during pregnancy (Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists,  
96 2021). We performed a systematic review and meta-analysis of the available literature to  
97 evaluate the rates of miscarriage and live birth among women who received a COVID-19  
98 vaccination.

99

100

## 101 **Materials and methods**

102

103 We performed a systematic review and meta-analysis using a prospectively registered protocol  
104 (CRD42021289098) and reported our findings as per PRISMA guidelines (Page *et al.*, 2021).

105

### 106 Search strategy

107 We searched MEDLINE, EMBASE and Cochrane CENTRAL until June 2022 using a  
108 combination of keyword and MeSH terms for studies of any design that compared the risk of  
109 miscarriage and other pregnancy outcomes between vaccinated and non-vaccinated pregnant  
110 women (Supplementary Data File S1).

111

### 112 Study selection and inclusion process

113 Relevant studies were screened in duplicate (MPR and JJT). Studies of any design that reported  
114 on miscarriage and other pregnancy outcomes in women who received any COVID-19 vaccine  
115 with or without a control cohort (placebo or no vaccine) were included. We excluded animal  
116 studies, those reporting on non-clinical outcomes in human participants, review articles and  
117 case reports. Data submitted to health regulators for evaluation of vaccine effectiveness and  
118 safety were also included if they were made publicly available ahead of peer review.

119

### 120 Data extraction

121 Data extraction was performed in triplicate (MPR, JJT and SCM) using a piloted electronic  
122 data collection tool with the following characteristics collected: study publication year and  
123 journal, inclusion-exclusion criteria, type of intervention and comparison evaluated,  
124 characteristics of the included study population and the evaluated COVID-19 vaccine, and all  
125 relevant clinical outcomes.



126

127 Outcome measures

128 We reported on the following pregnancy outcomes: miscarriage (defined as spontaneous loss  
129 of a pregnancy before 24 weeks gestation), live birth (defined as the birth of a live child after  
130 24 weeks gestation) and ongoing pregnancy (defined as a viable pregnancy after 12 weeks  
131 gestation).

132

133 Risk of bias assessment

134 Two reviewers (MPR and JJT) assessed the risk of bias and applicability of included studies  
135 independently using The Risk Of Bias In Non-randomised Studies of Interventions (ROBINS-  
136 I) tool (Sterne *et al.*, 2016). We evaluated the risk of bias in the included studies compared to  
137 a target randomised trial that evaluated the risk of miscarriage, live birth and ongoing  
138 pregnancy in women of reproductive age who received a COVID-19 vaccine compared to  
139 placebo or no vaccine. As most of the included studies were cohorts or interrupted time  
140 series that followed up on women who received a COVID-19 vaccine, we assessed the risk of  
141 bias due to confounding, participant selection, classification of intervention, deviation from the  
142 intended intervention, missing data, outcome measurement and selection of reported results.  
143 We then generated an overall risk of bias assessment for each study. Studies were deemed to  
144 be low risk of bias if they were assessed as low risk in all domains, moderate risk of bias if  
145 they were assessed as low or moderate risk of bias in any domain, serious risk of bias if they  
146 were assessed as serious risk of bias in at least one domain, but not at critical risk of bias in  
147 any domain, or critical risk of bias if one or more domains was assessed as critical.

148

149 Statistical analysis

150 We pooled data to evaluate the overall rate of miscarriage and live birth/ongoing pregnancy  
151 across all women who received a COVID-19 vaccine and generated a pooled risk ratio  
152 compared to women who were not vaccinated. We reported on the pooled event rate using risk  
153 with 95% confidence intervals (CI). For our comparative meta-analysis, we reported on  
154 dichotomous outcomes using summary risk ratio (RR) with 95% CI and on continuous  
155 outcomes using weighted mean difference (WMD) with 95% CI. We used a random effect  
156 meta-analysis and applied a restricted maximum likelihood (REML) model. Study  
157 heterogeneity among included trials was assessed using the  $I^2$  statistics. We also assessed the  
158 publication bias and small study effect using a funnel plot for each pairwise comparison and  
159 performed Egger's test to assess its statistical significance. We planned a sensitivity meta-  
160 regression and subgroup analyses to investigate potential effect modifiers where relevant. All  
161 statistical analyses were conducted in Stata V13 (StataCorp, TX, USA) and Open Meta-analyst  
162 software (Brown University; Providence, RI, USA).

163

164

## 165 **Results**

166

167 We screened 505 potentially relevant citations, assessed 28 in full and included 21 studies: 5  
168 randomised control trials (RCTs) (Hillson *et al.*, 2021; United States Food and Drug  
169 Administration, 2020; United States Food and Drug Administration, 2020; United States Food  
170 and Drug Administration, 2021; United States Food and Drug Administration, 2021) and 16  
171 observational studies (Aharon *et al.*, 2022; Avraham *et al.*, 2022; Bleicher *et al.*, 2021;  
172 Bookstein Peretz *et al.*, 2021; Citu *et al.*, 2022; Favre *et al.*, 2022; Huang *et al.*, 2022; Kachikis  
173 *et al.*, 2021; Kharbanda *et al.*, 2021; Magnus *et al.*, 2021; Moro *et al.*, 2022; Nabila Arfah *et*  
174 *al.*, 2021; Qiao *et al.*, 2021; Trostle *et al.*, 2021; Wang *et al.*, 2022; Zauche *et al.*, 2021). All  
175 together the studies reported on pregnancy outcomes in 149,685 women (Table 1 and  
176 Supplementary Table S1). Two studies reported on the same population (Aharon *et al.*, 2021;  
177 Aharon *et al.*, 2022) while an additional two studies reported on the same data registry (Moro  
178 *et al.*, 2022; Shimabukuro *et al.*, 2021) (Figure 1). All of the RCTs in this review excluded  
179 pregnant women at the time of recruitment but reported on those who became pregnant during  
180 the trial.

181

182 Six vaccines were used in included studies, including Pfizer-BioNTech BNT162b2 mRNA,  
183 Moderna mRNA-1273 SARS-CoV-2, Janssen Ad26.COVS.2.S, AstraZeneca ChAdOx1 nCoV-  
184 19, Sinopharm BBIBP-CorV and Sinovac-CoronaVac. Ten studies reported on pregnancy  
185 outcomes following at least one vaccine dose, eight studies reported pregnancy outcomes  
186 following two doses and one study reported outcomes after a third booster dose (Table 1).

187

188 Quality of included studies and risk of publication bias

189 Overall, the quality of the included studies was considered to have low to moderate risk of bias  
190 while four studies were considered to have a serious risk of bias (Supplementary Figure S1).  
191 All included studies were assessed as having missing information on adherence to the vaccine  
192 administration schedule, not allowing accurate assessment of the risk of bias for deviations  
193 from the intended intervention. Six of the included studies had an overall low risk of bias (6/21,  
194 29%), half showed a moderate risk (11/21, 52%), and four showed a high risk of bias (4/21,  
195 19%) mainly due to participant selection and measurement and outcomes reporting. Outcome  
196 reporting was poor overall with only two studies offering a clear outcome definitions for  
197 miscarriage and ongoing pregnancy (Aharon *et al.*, 2021; Hillson *et al.*, 2021). Our funnel plot  
198 suggested no major variation across included studies with a non-significant Egger's test at  
199  $p=0.81$  (Supplementary Figure S2).

200

#### 201 Pregnancy outcomes

202 We pooled the overall miscarriage rate across all included studies among women who received  
203 any COVID-19 vaccine which was 9% (n= 18 studies, 147,49/123,185, 95%CI 0.05-0.14)  
204 (Figure 2). We then compared the risk of miscarriage among those who received any COVID-  
205 19 vaccine to those who did not, which suggested no significant difference between the two  
206 groups (RR 1.07, 95%CI 0.89-1.28,  $I^2$  35.8%) (Figure 3).

207 The overall proportion of women with ongoing pregnancies or live birth among those who  
208 were vaccinated was consistent with the reported population levels at 77% (n= 14 studies,  
209 103,240/117,766, 95%CI 0.65-0.89) (Figure 2). Compared to the unvaccinated group, women  
210 who received the COVID-19 vaccines had similar rates of ongoing pregnancies or live birth  
211 (RR 1.00, 95%CI 0.97-1.03,  $I^2$  10.7%) (Figure 3).

212

213

## 214 **Discussion**

215

216 We identified 21 studies reporting miscarriage or live birth/ongoing pregnancy outcomes  
217 among 149,685 women. Our results demonstrate no apparent increase in the risk of miscarriage  
218 among pregnant women who received the COVID-19 vaccines, which was consistent with the  
219 rate of miscarriage in the general population before the pandemic (Quenby *et al.*, 2021).  
220 Compared to unvaccinated women, those who received the vaccine had a slightly higher risk  
221 of miscarriage, though this was not statistically significant. This trend could be explained by  
222 several confounders, such as population socio-economics, baseline risk factors (e.g. recurrent  
223 pregnancy loss), co-morbidities and access to health care services, which were observed in  
224 cohort studies evaluating third-trimester pregnancy outcomes among vaccinated women (Fell  
225 *et al.*, 2022; Magnus *et al.*, 2022). There was no significant difference in the relative risk (RR)  
226 of live birth or ongoing pregnancy among women who received COVID-19 vaccination  
227 compared to those who did not receive a vaccine.

228

229 Overall, the certainty in the pooled evidence was low (Figure 4) due to serious concerns about  
230 the consistency, precision and directness of our synthesised effect estimate. Given the high  
231 heterogeneity across included studies, our results should be interpreted with caution pending  
232 larger well-powered controlled studies.

233

## 234 Strengths and limitations

235 We present a systematic review that employed a prospectively registered protocol and reported  
236 as per established guidelines, therefore offering a comprehensive assessment of the literature  
237 on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy. Only about half of the included studies had  
238 appropriately matched controls which limited our ability to generate a risk ratio with accurate

239 confidence intervals. Still, we reported narratively on all included studies and generated a  
240 weighted average to estimate the overall proportion of miscarriage and ongoing pregnancy or  
241 live birth among vaccinated pregnant women.

242

243 We included studies from various countries including data from large regulatory randomised  
244 trials that were used to licence the use of COVID-19 vaccine in the general population.  
245 However, as pregnant women were excluded from these trials at the time of randomisation, the  
246 evidence included in this review is mainly observational with high level of heterogeneity.  
247 Several factors could explain this heterogeneity including variation in study design and patient  
248 characteristics, and the high risk of bias across included studies. This limits the generalizability  
249 of our meta-analysis and highlights the need for better quality primary studies involving  
250 pregnant women.

251

252 The majority of the included studies practiced suboptimal and varied outcome reporting which  
253 limited our ability to synthesise high-quality evidence, as reflected in our GRADE assessment  
254 (Figure 4). This reduced the certainty of our pooled estimates, especially since other important  
255 pregnancy outcomes, e.g. stillbirth and ectopic pregnancy, were not reported.

256

257 While we reported a relatively low miscarriage rate (9%) across a large cohort (n=123,184),  
258 our pooled rate offers a limited snapshot assessment over a short period of time and therefore  
259 should be interpreted with caution. Clearly, several factors could influence the overall  
260 miscarriage rate during the pandemic such as ethnicity, mode of conception, and access to  
261 maternity services during lockdown periods (García-Enguádanos *et al.*, 2002).

262

263 As most of these studies focused on short snapshot assessment of COVID-19 vaccine safety,  
264 the majority reported on the combined outcome of ongoing pregnancy or live birth. Clearly,  
265 this outcome does not offer an accurate assessment of the long-term reproductive outcome as  
266 not all ongoing pregnancies captured will yield a live birth. Still, we chose to report on this  
267 outcome to provide an accurate summary of the current available literature, assess the  
268 knowledge gap, and make recommendations to improve the quality of future research.

269

270 We planned to perform meta-regression and subgroup analysis to evaluate and adjust for  
271 important confounders such as patient characteristics, vaccine types (e.g. mRNA versus vector)  
272 and the number of vaccine boosters. However, we were unable to produce these additional  
273 analyses due to poor reporting across included studies (Table 1). Other important effect  
274 modifiers that were also poorly reported included patient age group, method of conception,  
275 multiples pregnancy, and the impact across first versus second-trimester miscarriage.  
276 Standardised outcome reporting is therefore essential to improve the quality of future evidence  
277 synthesis particularly to facilitate patient-level data analyses.

278

### 279 Implications for clinical practice

280 The COVID-19 pandemic introduced unprecedented challenges with enduring humanitarian  
281 and economic crises that are still unfolding (Spinelli *et al.*, 2020). In addition to its high virality,  
282 rapid mutations and lack of curative treatments, a key challenge in controlling the COVID-19  
283 virus was the role of mass media misinformation that often undermined efforts to promote key  
284 prevention strategies like mask-wearing, social distancing and vaccination (Loomba *et al.*,  
285 2021; Roozenbeek *et al.*, 2020).

286

287 Generally, concerns about the safety of vaccines in pregnancy could be attributed to the generic  
288 immunological and inflammatory response that could impact fetal implantation and  
289 embryogenesis (Arora *et al.*, 2021; Moodley *et al.*, 2021). However, in the case of COVID-19  
290 mRNA vaccines, there were concerns disseminated on social media platforms claiming higher  
291 risk of miscarriage due to the formation of antibodies that could cross the placenta and bind to  
292 the spike protein called syncytin-1, a critical protein in the formation of the syncytiotrophoblast  
293 layer of the human placenta and embryogenesis (M. Blake Evans *et al.*, 2021). Several studies  
294 have come out since to disprove these claims with no evidence from immunological studies to  
295 support such interaction (Moodley *et al.*, 2021). Our findings further support the lack of  
296 harmful evidence pending larger, better-quality studies at a population level.

297

298 Considering the increased risk of miscarriage and other adverse pregnancy outcomes  
299 associated with COVID-19 infection in pregnancy (Stock *et al.*, 2022), vaccines play a vital  
300 role to minimise the impact of this disease on pregnant women and their offspring (Arora *et*  
301 *al.*, 2021; Moodley *et al.*, 2021). Ideally, the risks of vaccination should be evaluated  
302 considering the patient's current medical health, risk profile for COVID-19 morbidity, and past  
303 adverse reactions or febrile illnesses to previous vaccinations. Vaccinations in the firsttrimester  
304 could pose some risks of high immunogenicity and inflammation from a febrile illness to the  
305 fetus; especially in patients who have few or no risk factors for serious morbidity should they  
306 contract COVID-19. However, the merits of avoiding COVID-19 vaccination in the first  
307 trimester in favour of the pre-conception period or the second trimester remain unclear and  
308 further research is needed.

309

310 Available COVID-19 vaccines seem to have high immunogenicity and reactogenicity (Gray *et*  
311 *al.*, 2021), often associated with a systemic inflammatory process manifesting with headache,



312 myalgia, chills and fever (Shimabukuro *et al.*, 2021). Pregnant women receiving COVID-19  
313 vaccines reported a higher incidence of systemic fever after the second dose compared to non-  
314 pregnant women (Gray *et al.*, 2021). Fever in early pregnancy and during embryogenesis may  
315 be a teratogenic phenomenon and this may increase the risk of miscarriage especially in the  
316 first trimester or among those with more severe vaccine side effects (Dreier *et al.*, 2014;  
317 Graham *et al.*, 1998). We were unable to explore the optimal timing to provide COVID-19  
318 vaccines in pregnancy and whether such side effects could have a differential impact on first  
319 versus second-trimester pregnancies.

320

321 As the rate of re-infection with new mutations of the COVID-19 virus is increasing  
322 progressively (Jain *et al.*, 2021), there is a need to evaluate the optimal timing to provide  
323 COVID-19 vaccines for both de-novo and booster immunity. This is particularly relevant to  
324 high-risk women planning for pregnancy such as those with chronic disease or those  
325 undergoing assisted conception (Han *et al.*, 2022).

326

### 327 Future research

328 There is a critical need to evaluate the short and long-term safety and effectiveness outcomes  
329 of the different COVID-19 vaccines on pregnant women and their offspring. As the experience  
330 with the different types of COVID-19 vaccines grows (mRNA versus vector vaccines), large  
331 prospective cohorts with appropriately matched controls are needed to evaluate the  
332 effectiveness and safety of the different COVID-19 vaccination programmes in reducing the  
333 reported risks of adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes (Wei *et al.*, 2021).

334

335 Several studies have identified binding and neutralising antibody titres for COVID-19 in infant  
336 cord blood and the breast milk of lactating vaccinated women. This could suggest long-lasting

337 protective immunity that might help to reduce the risk of re-infection or severe disease among  
338 this vulnerable cohort (Fell *et al.*, 2022; Goldshtein *et al.*, 2022; Magnus *et al.*, 2022).  
339 However, more epidemiological and translational studies are needed to evaluate the long-term  
340 health outcomes among both mothers and offspring post vaccine exposure.

341

342 We encountered a high degree of varied outcome reporting which significantly hindered  
343 effective evidence synthesis. Future studies should adopt standardised reporting of core  
344 outcomes as per published core sets for miscarriage, fertility and pregnancy to enable more  
345 efficient evidence synthesis and reduce research wastage (Duffy *et al.*, 2020; Duffy *et al.*, 2021;  
346 Smith *et al.*, 2017).

347

#### 348 Conclusions

349 COVID-19 vaccines are not associated with an increased risk of miscarriage or decreased  
350 rates of ongoing pregnancy or live birth rates among women of reproductive age. The current  
351 evidence remains limited and larger population studies are needed to evaluate the  
352 effectiveness and safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy.

353

354

355 **Data availability:** All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this  
356 published article and its supplementary information files.

357

358 **Authors' roles:** MPR and JJT drafted the initial protocol and manuscript, and conducted the  
359 search, study selection and initial analysis. SCM contributed to the data extraction and  
360 visualisation. BHA conceived the idea, conducted the final analysis, and drafted the final  
361 manuscript. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

362

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367

368 **Conflict of interest:** All authors declare no conflict of interest.

369

370

371

372 **Figure 1. Study screening and inclusion process for systematic review evaluating the**  
373 **risk of miscarriage and ongoing pregnancy live birth among pregnancy women who**  
374 **received COVID-19 vaccine.**

375

376 **Figure 2. Pooled event rate of miscarriage and ongoing pregnancy/live birth among**  
377 **pregnancy women who received the COVID-19 vaccinations. A) miscarriage. B) ongoing**  
378 **pregnancy/live birth.**

379

380 **Figure 3. Forest plot showing the risk ration of miscarriage and ongoing pregnancy/live**  
381 **birth among pregnancy women who received COVID-19 vaccination compared to**  
382 **unvaccinated women. A) miscarriage. B) ongoing pregnancy/live birth.**

383

384 **Figure 4. GRADE evidence assessment table for the risk of miscarriage and ongoing**  
385 **pregnancy/live birth among pregnancy women who received COVID-10 vaccine.**

386

387 **Supplementary Figure S1. ROBBINS1 assessment of the quality of included studies that**  
388 **evaluated the risk of miscarriage among pregnancy women who received COVID-19**  
389 **vaccine.**

390

391 **Supplementary Figures S2. Funnel plot showing the variation in effect estimates by**  
392 **standard error across studies that evaluated the risk of miscarriage among pregnancy**  
393 **women who received COVID-19 vaccine.**

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595

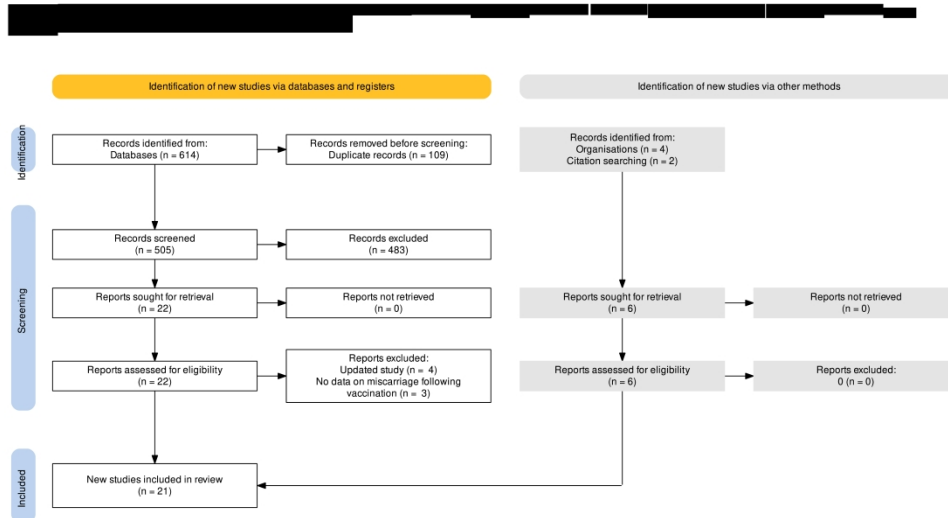


Fig. 1

671x360mm (236 x 236 DPI)

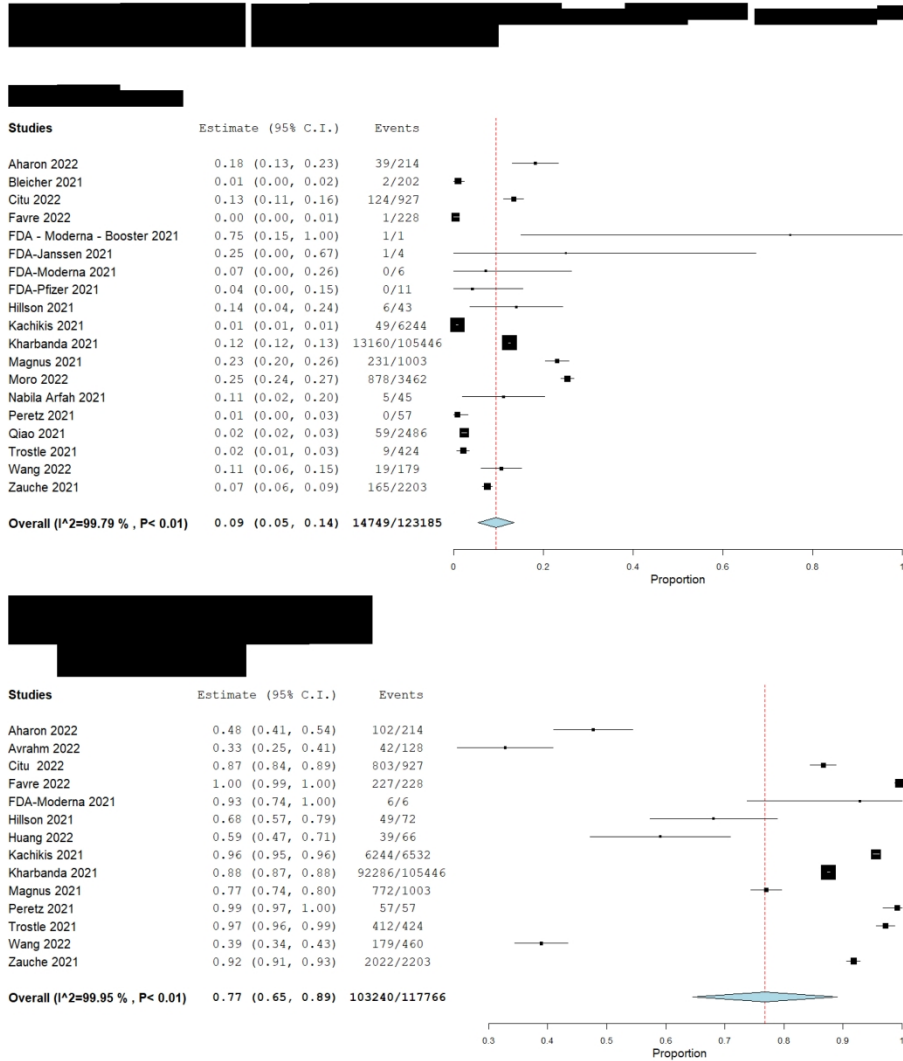


Fig.2

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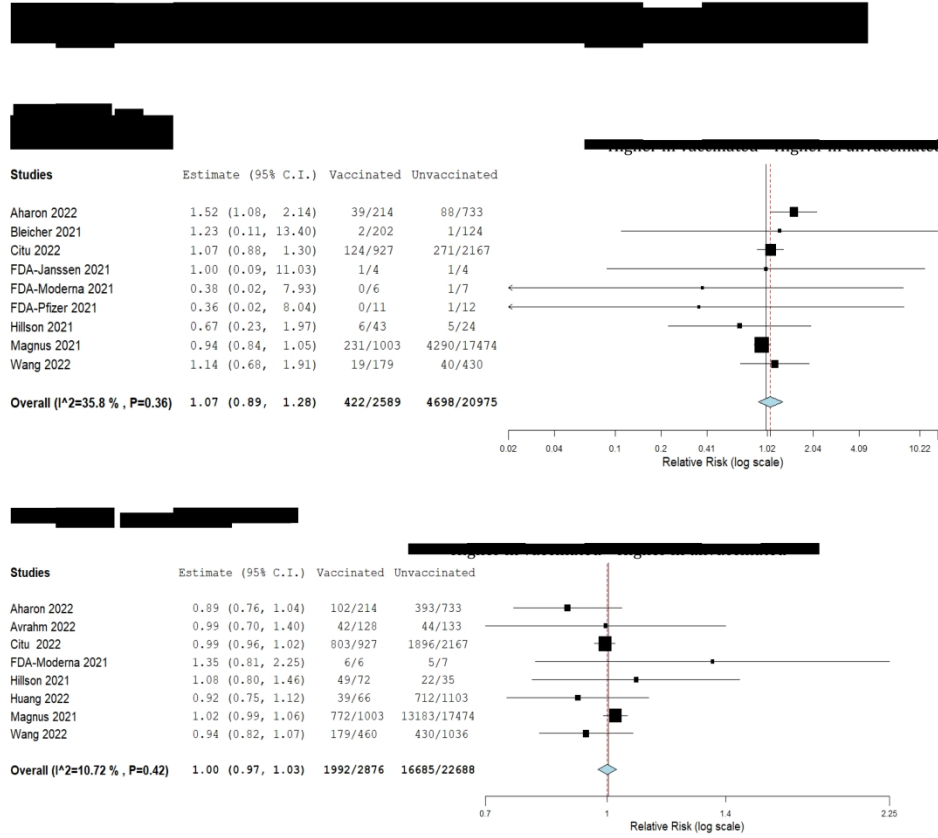


Fig. 3

469x403mm (236 x 236 DPI)





No of studies	Study design	Certainty assessment					No of patients		Effect		Certainty	Importance
		Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	[intervention]	[comparison]	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)		
<b>Miscarriage</b>												
9	observational studies	serious	serious	serious	not serious	all plausible residual confounding would reduce the demonstrated effect	422/2589 (16.3%)	4698/20975 (22.4%)	<b>RR 1.07</b> (0.89 to 1.28)	<b>16 more per 1,000</b> (from 25 fewer to 63 more)	⊕⊕○○ Low	CRITICAL
<b>Ongoing pregnancy/Live birth</b>												
8	observational studies	serious	serious	serious	serious	all plausible residual confounding would reduce the demonstrated effect	1992/2876 (69.3%)	16685/22688 (73.5%)	<b>RR 1.00</b> (0.97 to 1.03)	<b>0 fewer per 1,000</b> (from 22 fewer to 22 more)	⊕○○○ Very low	CRITICAL

CI: confidence interval; RR: risk ratio

Fig. 4

505x250mm (236 x 236 DPI)

**Table 1:** Characteristics of included studies that evaluated the risk of miscarriage and rates of ongoing pregnancy/live birth among pregnant women who received a COVID-19 vaccine.

Study	Design	Countries	Funding source	Covid-19 vaccine	Vaccine doses	Inclusion Criteria	Numbers analysed (n=)	Risk of Bias
<b>Aharon (2022)</b>	Cohort	USA	Not stated	Pfizer, Moderna	2	Women undergoing fertility treatment who were vaccinated at least 14 days prior to starting medication for ovarian stimulation or a frozen-thawed embryo transfer cycle	2153	Moderate
<b>Avraham (2022)</b>	Cohort	Israel	No external funding	Pfizer	2	Women 20-42 years old undergoing IVF treatment cycles at a single centre	400	Moderate
<b>Bleicher (2021)</b>	Cohort	USA	Not stated	Pfizer	≥1	Being pregnant at enrolment and valid questionnaire	326	Serious
<b>Bookstein Peretz (2021)</b>	Case-control	Israel	Not stated	Pfizer	2	Pregnant women between 2-40 weeks' gestation who completed two doses of vaccine	57	Serious
<b>Citu (2022)</b>	Cohort	Romania	No external funding	Pfizer, Moderna	≥1	Women aged >18 years who were vaccinated during the first trimester of pregnancy	3094	Moderate
<b>Favre (2022)</b>	Cohort	Switzerland	Swiss Federal Office of Public Health and the CHUV Foundation	Pfizer, Moderna	≥1	Pregnant women with at least one injection between one week before last menstrual period to end of pregnancy	228	Moderate
<b>FDA - Janssen (2021)</b>	RCT	Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Mexico, USA, South Africa	Janssen Research and Development	Janssen	1	Adults 18 to 59 years of age and 60 years of age or older, respectively, who were in good or stable health and did not have coexisting conditions that have been associated with an increased risk of severe COVID--19	8	Low

<b>FDA - Moderna (2020)</b>	RCT	USA	Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases	Moderna	2	18 years old and had no known history of SARS-CoV-2 infection and whose locations or circumstances put them at appreciable risk of acquiring SARS-CoV-2 infection or who were at high risk for severe disease (or both)	13	Low
<b>FDA - Moderna (Booster) (2021)</b>	RCT	USA	Not stated	Moderna booster	2 + 1	Individuals 65 years of age and older, individuals 18 through 64 years of age at high risk of severe COVID-19, and individuals 18 through 64 years of age whose recent institutional or occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2 puts them at high risk of serious complications of COVID-19 including severe COVID-19	1	Low
<b>FDA - Pfizer (2020)</b>	RCT	USA, Brazil, Argentina, Turkey, South Africa, Germany	BioNTech and Pfizer	Pfizer	2	Adults 16 years of age or older who were healthy or had stable chronic medical conditions, including but not limited to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus or hepatitis C virus infection	23	Low
<b>Hillson (2021)</b>	RCT	UK, Brazil, South Africa	UK Research and Innovation, National Institutes of Health Research (NIHR), The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Lemann Foundation, Rede D'Or, the Brava and Telles Foundation, NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre, Thames Valley and South Midland's NIHR Clinical Research Network, and AstraZeneca.	AstraZeneca	2	Women enrolled on a RCT, who were thought not to be pregnant but found to be pregnant, and this occurred in four ongoing phase 1, phase 2 and phase 3 clinical trials	67	Low
<b>Huang (2022)</b>	Cohort	China	National Natural Science Foundation of China, Key Research and Development Program of Jiangxi Province	Sinopharm, Sinovac	2	Women undergoing a fresh IVF cycle who had received at least two vaccine doses at least 3 weeks apart	2185	Moderate
<b>Kachikis (2021)</b>	Cohort	USA	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development	Pfizer, Moderna, Janssen	2	Women who were pregnant, lactating, or planning pregnancy at the time of COVID-19 vaccination	6244	Serious

<b>Kharbanda (2021)</b>	Cohort	USA	Centre for Disease Control and Prevention	Pfizer, Moderna, Janssen	$\geq 1$	Women with ongoing pregnancies between 6- and 19-weeks' gestation	105446	Moderate
<b>Magnus (2021)</b>	Case-control	Norway	Research Council of Norway	Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca	$\geq 1$	Women who had miscarriage before 14 weeks of gestation or primary care-based confirmation of ongoing pregnancy in the first trimester	18477	Low
<b>Moro (2022)</b>	Cohort	USA	No funding received	Pfizer, Moderna, Janssen	$\geq 1$	Pregnant women who received COVID-19 vaccine and reported an adverse events to VAERS by using a pregnancy-status question in the form	3462	Moderate
<b>Nabila Arfah (2021)</b>	Cohort	Malaysia	Not stated	mRNA COVID-19 vaccine	$\geq 1$	Pregnant women after receiving a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine	45	Serious
<b>Qiao (2021)</b>	Cohort	Brazil	Sinovac Life Sciences	Sinovac, Janssen, AstraZeneca, Pfizer	$\geq 1$	Pregnant or postpartum women who reported vaccine-related adverse effects to adverse events following immunisation surveillance information system.	3333	Moderate
<b>Trostle (2021)</b>	Cohort	USA	Not stated	Pfizer, Moderna	$\geq 1$	Pregnant women who received at least one dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy	424	Moderate
<b>Wang (2022)</b>	Cohort	China	National Natural Science Foundation of China	Inactivated COVID-19 vaccine	2	Participants who had completed gamete retrieval and embryo cryopreservation prior to vaccination with two doses of inactivated COVID-19 vaccine followed by a frozen-thaw embryo transfer cycle.	1496	Moderate
<b>Zauche (2021)</b>	Cohort	USA	Not stated	Pfizer, Moderna	$\geq 1$	Singleton pregnancy who had received at least one dose of an mRNA Covid-19 vaccine either before conception or before 20 weeks of gestation and who did not have a pregnancy loss before 6 weeks of gestation	2203	Moderate

**Supplementary Data File S1:** Search strategy to identify primary studies that evaluated the risk of miscarriage among pregnant women who received COVID-19 vaccine.

1 exp COVID-19 Vaccines/  
 2 (Pfizer-BioNTech or Comirnaty or Moderna or Spikevax or (Johnson adj2 Johnson)  
 or Janssen or AstraZeneca or AZD1222 or Vaxzevria or Covishield or ChAdOx1 or  
 BBIBP-CorV or BIBP or Sinopharm or Sputnik\* or Gam- COVID-Vac-8 or Sputnik  
 light or CoronaVac or Sinovac or Dream vaccin\*).mp.  
 3 1 or 2  
 4 exp SARS-CoV-2/  
 5 exp COVID-19/  
 6 (COVID 19 or Corona\* or 2019-n\* or novel CoV or sarscov2 or 2019nCoV or nCOV  
 or COVID-19 or SARS-CoV-2 or txid2697049).mp.  
 7 4 or 5 or 6  
 8 exp Immunization/  
 9 exp Vaccines/  
 10 (Vaccin\* or Immuni\* or injection\* or Inoculat\* or boost\*).mp.  
 11 8 or 9 or 10  
 12 7 and 11  
 13 3 or 12  
 14 exp Pregnancy Outcome/  
 15 Pregnancy Complications/  
 16 exp Pregnancy, High-Risk/  
 17 exp abortion, spontaneous/  
 18 ((f?etal or f?etus\*) adj3 (death\* or die\* or dead or decease\*)) or ((recur\* or habitual  
 or spontaneous or tubal) adj2 (abort\*)) or miscarr\* or (pregnan\* adj3 outcome) or  
 (pregnan\* adj3 los\*)  
 19 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 or 18  
 24 13 and 19

**Supplementary Figure S1:** ROBINS I assessment of the quality of included studies that evaluated the risk of miscarriage among pregnant women who received COVID-19 vaccine.

Study	Risk of bias domains							Overall
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	
Bleicher (2021)	-	✗	-	?	-	✗	-	✗
Bookstein Peretz (2021)	?	✗	-	?	✗	✗	-	✗
Kachikis (2021)	?	✗	-	?	-	✗	-	✗
Kharbanda (2021)	-	+	-	?	+	+	+	-
Magnus (2021)	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+
Nabila Arfah (2021)	?	✗	-	?	-	✗	✗	✗
Qiao (2021)	?	-	+	?	-	-	+	-
Trostle (2021)	?	-	+	?	+	-	-	-
Zauche (2021)	+	-	+	?	-	-	-	-
Aharon (2022)	+	-	-	?	+	-	+	-
Avraham (2022)	+	-	+	?	+	+	+	-
Citu (2022)	+	-	+	?	+	-	+	-
Favre (2022)	+	+	+	?	-	+	-	-
Huang (2022)	-	-	-	?	+	-	+	-
Moro (2022)	?	-	+	?	-	-	-	-
Wang (2022)	-	+	+	?	-	+	+	-
FDA - Pfizer (2020)	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+
FDA - Moderna (2020)	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+
FDA - Moderna (Booster) (2021)	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+
FDA - Janssen (2021)	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+
Hillson (2021)	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+

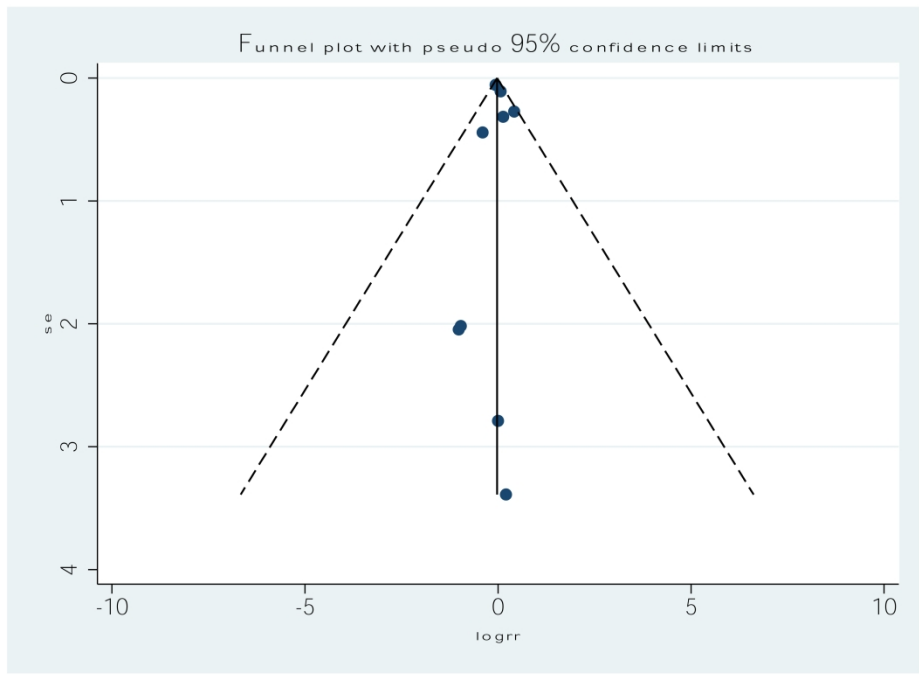
Domains:  
D1: Bias due to confounding.  
D2: Bias due to selection of participants.  
D3: Bias in classification of interventions.  
D4: Bias due to deviations from intended interventions.  
D5: Bias due to missing data.  
D6: Bias in measurement of outcomes.  
D7: Bias in selection of the reported result.

Judgement  
✗ Serious  
- Moderate  
+ Low  
? No information

S1

440x617mm (236 x 236 DPI)

**Supplementary Figure S2:** Funnel plot showing the variation in effect estimates by standard error across included studies that evaluated the risk of miscarriage among pregnant women who received COVID-19 vaccine



S2

444x399mm (236 x 236 DPI)

**Supplementary Table SI:** Summary of the characteristics and findings of included studies that evaluated the risk of miscarriage and ongoing pregnancy/live birth among pregnant women who received COVID-19 vaccine.

<b>STUDY</b>	<b>SETTINGS</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>AHARON (2022)</b>	Single-centre retrospective observational study of women who underwent controlled ovarian hyperstimulation for IVF or single euploid frozen-thawed embryo transfer.	Women who received two doses of Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccination at least 14 days prior to starting medication for controlled ovarian hyperstimulation or frozen-thawed embryo transfer cycle were included. A control group consisted of unvaccinated women undergoing controlled ovarian hyperstimulation or frozen-thawed embryo transfer cycles.	Higher parity, lower use of antagonist protocol and higher use of the flare protocol was observed in the control group. No associations were observed between vaccinated and control groups with regard to fertilization rate (primary outcome), clinical pregnancy rate or rate of miscarriage.
<b>AVRAHAM (2022)</b>	Retrospective observational study with data from two centres of women undergoing IVF treatment.	200 women who had received at least two doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination were compared to 200 age-matched non-vaccinated controls.	The main outcome measures were the mean number of oocytes retrieved and clinical pregnancy rate. The mean number of oocytes retrieved and clinical pregnancy rate were similar among vaccinated women and non-vaccinated controls. Additionally, no difference was observed in fertilisation rate, embryo quality or mean number of cryopreserved embryos between vaccinated and non-vaccinated controls.
<b>BLEICHER (2021)</b>	Prospective observational cohort study where short-term pregnancy outcomes were assessed among vaccinated (Pfizer) and unvaccinated pregnant women through online questionnaires.	An initial questionnaire was shared via social media with responders being invited to complete a follow-up questionnaire after one month. Data collected included vaccination intentions, vaccination status, aspects of personal medical and obstetric history, and complications of their current pregnancy. The method by which pregnancy and	432 women responded to the initial questionnaire, with the follow up questionnaire receiving 326 responses. No significant differences in composite pregnancy complications, first trimester miscarriage or other adverse obstetric outcomes were observed between vaccinated and unvaccinated groups.



		miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	
<b>BOOKSTEIN PERETZ (2021)</b>	Observational case-control study of pregnant women vaccinated with a two-dose Pfizer regimen aiming to assess the vaccines' immunogenicity, reactogenicity and impact on obstetric outcomes.	Outcomes among vaccinated pregnant participants were compared to a control group comprising age-matched non-pregnant vaccinated women. Pregnant participants were recruited via social media, and data was collected via serial questionnaires and blood sampling.	390 women returned the questionnaire and were included in the study alongside 260 control women. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined. Adverse obstetric outcomes were rare, and comparable to the general population. The Pfizer vaccine induced humoral immunity in all vaccinated pregnant participants, however levels of SARS-CoV-2 IgG were lower in pregnant women compared to non-pregnant controls.
<b>CITU (2022)</b>	Single-centre retrospective observational study of pregnant women in the first trimester who were either vaccinated or unvaccinated.	The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	The risk of miscarriage after mRNA COVID-19 immunization is commensurate with the predicted risk in non-vaccinated pregnant women.
<b>FAVRE (2022)</b>	Swiss nationwide multicentre prospective cohort study	Pregnant women who received at least one dose of mRNA vaccine using the COVI-PREG registry.	Early and late spontaneous abortion was reported in 1/107 patient and 1/228 patient respectively. No stillbirth was reported among 530 patients exposed with covid-19 vaccines in pregnancy.

<b>FDA - JANSSEN (2021)</b>	A large Phase 3 randomised, double-blinded placebo-controlled trial of a single dose of Ad26.COV2.S in approximately 40,000 participants in the United States for assessment of safety, immunogenicity, and efficacy endpoints.	Participants who were pregnant or planned to conceive within 3 months of vaccine administration were excluded.	Subgroup analyses of adverse events identified 8 reported pregnancies (4 vaccine, 4 placebo). 1 miscarriage was reported in each arm respectively. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.
<b>FDA - MODERNA (2020)</b>	A large Phase 3 randomised, double-blinded placebo-controlled trial of two 100µg doses of mRNA-1273	30,400 participants in the United States for assessment of safety and efficacy endpoints. A negative pregnancy test was required prior to receiving study intervention.	There were no miscarriages in the vaccinated group and 1 miscarriage in the placebo group. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined. Subgroup analyses of adverse events identified 13 reported pregnancies (6 vaccine, 7 placebo).
<b>FDA - MODERNA (BOOSTER) (2020)</b>	An open-label intervention study where participants who had previously received two 50µg or 100µg doses of mRNA-1273 received a 50 µg booster dose of mRNA-1273.	343 participants in the United States were enrolled to assess the safety and immunogenicity of the booster dose.	Subgroup analyses of adverse events reported 1 miscarriage 52 days after receiving booster dose, and subsequently conceived 115 days after the booster dose.
<b>FDA - PFIZER (2020)</b>	A large global Phase 1/2/3 randomised, double-blinded placebo-controlled pivotal registration study of two 30µg doses of BNT162b2 vaccine	44,000 participants for assessment of safety, immunogenicity, and efficacy endpoints. A negative pregnancy test was required prior to receiving study intervention. With approximately 18,800 participants in both control and vaccinated groups, a comparable number of pregnancies were observed (11 vaccine, 12 placebo).	There were no miscarriages in the vaccinated group and 1 miscarriage in the placebo group. A cumulative analysis of post-authorisation adverse event reported 270 pregnancies, of which there were 23 miscarriages reported. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.
<b>HILLSON (2021)</b>	4 Phase 1/2/3 randomised, double-blinded placebo-controlled trials of	23848 participants between April and November 2020 across UK, Brazil and South Africa. A negative pregnancy test was required prior to	Miscarriage was defined as pregnancy loss before 23 weeks of gestation. The method by which pregnancy was confirmed

	two 0.5ml doses of ChAdOx1 nCoV-19.	receiving study intervention. Pregnancy outcome analysis set included 107 out of 9755 women of childbearing age who reported a pregnancy (72 vaccine, 35 control).	was not defined. There were no evidence of an association between reduced fertility and vaccination, Excluding Brazilian data, 11 miscarriages were reported (6 vaccine, 5 control),
<b>HUANG (2022)</b>	Single-centre retrospective matched case-control study of women undergoing fresh IVF cycles.	Women vaccinated with two doses of Sinopharm or Sinovac comprised a case group and unvaccinated women comprised a control group. Cases and controls were matched using propensity scoring based on 14 covariates.	Similar outcomes including number of oocytes retrieved, good quality embryo-rate, clinical pregnancy rate and biochemical pregnancy rate were observed between case and control groups.
<b>KACHIKIS (2021)</b>	Large online prospective cohort study of adults who were pregnant, lactating, or planning pregnancy at the time of COVID-19 vaccination. Participants were recruited online to the University of Washington COVID-19 Vaccine in Pregnancy and Lactation Registry via chain-referral and snowball sampling.	Data including participant demographics, vaccine side-effects and outcome data were collected via questionnaires. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined. 17 525 participants were included, including 7809 participants who were pregnant at the time of their first vaccine (Pfizer, Moderna or Janssen) dose and 6586 pregnant participants who had received a second vaccine dose at the time of data analysis.	6244 individuals remained pregnant, and 49 individuals reported miscarriage.
<b>KHARBANDA (2021)</b>	Observational case-control study of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy and spontaneous abortion using the Vaccine Safety Datalink.	A database collaboration between the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and nine US health systems. The likelihood of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine in the 28 days prior to a spontaneous abortion were compared with the likelihood of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine in the 28 days prior to index dates for ongoing pregnancies. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	Spontaneous abortions did not have an increased odds of exposure to COVID-19 vaccination compared to ongoing pregnancies.

<b>MAGNUS (2021)</b>	Observational case-control study from Norwegian health registries using data on first trimester pregnancies and COVID-19 vaccination.	Odds ratios for COVID-19 vaccination in a period prior to miscarriage or ongoing pregnancy were estimated, adjusted for potential confounders and stratified according to number of vaccinations. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	No evidence of increased risk of miscarriage after COVID-19 vaccination among the study group.
<b>MORO (2022)</b>	Observational study of COVID-19 vaccination	Pregnant individuals using data from the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) across 3 different vaccines. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	Among 3462 reports involving pregnant women, there were 878 (25.4%) cases of miscarriage, 76 (2.2%) cases of preterm delivery, 62 (1.8%) cases of stillbirth and 8 (0.2%) maternal deaths.
<b>NABILA ARFAH (2021)</b>	Small prospective observational study of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy in	45 healthcare workers in Kedah, Malaysia who were found to be pregnant after vaccination. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	5 miscarriages were reported among this group, however due to limited data present the authors are unable to comment on the safety of COVID-19 vaccination safety during pregnancy.
<b>QIAO (2021)</b>	Observational study of COVID-19 vaccination	Pregnant individuals using data from the Brazilian surveillance information system for adverse events (SI-EAPV) across 4 different vaccines. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	Among 2486 reports involving pregnant and postpartum women, there were 59 (2.4%) reported cases of miscarriage, 13 (0.52%) cases of neonatal death, 7 (0.28%) cases of preterm delivery
<b>TROSTLE (2021)</b>	Descriptive observational study	424 pregnant women who received at least one dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine in New York University Langone Health. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined.	9 miscarriages, 3 terminations and 327 ongoing pregnancies were reported. No concerning trends were observed regarding birth outcomes among 85 women.
<b>WANG (2022)</b>	Retrospective observational study of cryopreserved embryo transfer cycles at a single	Participants who had received two doses of inactivated COVID-19 vaccine were compared with unvaccinated controls.	Subgroups comprising those transferred cleavage-stage embryos and blastocysts were analysed, finding no differences in embryo implantation,

	tertiary centre in China.		clinical pregnancy or miscarriage rates between vaccinated and unvaccinated groups.
<b>ZUACHE (2021)</b>	Observational study of COVID-19 vaccination in pregnant individuals who received at least one dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine either before conception or before 20 weeks gestation.	2456 pregnant women between 6 and 20 weeks gestation were identified from Centres for Disease Control and Prevention V-safe COVID-19 Pregnancy registry. The method by which pregnancy and miscarriage were confirmed was not defined. Life table methods were used to calculate the cumulative risk of miscarriage according to gestational week, with appropriate left truncation.	Sensitivity analysis after age standardisation demonstrated the cumulative risk of miscarriage from 6 to less than 20 weeks gestation was 18.5% (95% CI, 16.1 to 20.8), which was within the expected risk range.