

MEDIA RELEASE



**The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Obstetricians
and Gynaecologists**

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Pregnant women should be particularly careful if travelling overseas

In light of the recent swine flu breakout to hit Mexico and quickly impacting other countries worldwide, pregnant women should take particular care to avoid exposure to the virus.

During pregnancy, there is normally some weakening of the immune system which can lead to infections being more severe.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) recommends obtaining information from such avenues as the Federal Government's travel advisory website: www.smartraveller.gov.au.

'In an event where a woman does contract the influenza, it is likely that the benefits of the anti-viral treatment (e.g. tamiflu) will outweigh any theoretical risks', said Professor Permezel, Vice-President of RANZCOG.

'Animal research on tamiflu, has not led to an expectation of birth defects as a result of its use in pregnancy and use beyond the first few weeks of pregnancy is even less likely to cause harm', said Professor Permezel today.

'As the winter months approaches, it is timely for everyone including pregnant women, to consider vaccination against the common winter influenza.

'The influenza vaccine does not contain live virus and there is no evidence of any damage to the fetus or adverse events in pregnancy', said Professor Permezel.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) is dedicated to maintaining the highest possible standards in obstetrics and gynaecology in Australia and New Zealand.

**For further information or to arrange an interview with Professor Permezel,
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