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## Pregnant women snub flu jab

AUSTRALIAN women are advised to get the flu jab during pregnancy to protect themselves and their baby, yet only one-third are opting to have the shot.

Findings from a study of more than 7000 Australian women found those who had the influenza vaccination at any stage during their pregnancy did not have an increased risk of preterm or low-birthweight babies.

### LUCIE VAN DEN BERG

Almost 2500 women had the vaccination, while more than 4600 opted not to.

Menzies School of Health Research PhD student and lead author Lisa McHugh said they found no clinically significant differences in infants' birthweight or gestational age at birth between the two groups of women.

"Our study results contrib-

ute to the evidence around the safety of receiving an influenza vaccine during any trimester of pregnancy," Ms McHugh said.

"We hope this provides reassurance to pregnant women and healthcare providers, given that vaccination is the best way to prevent illness and death from influenza infection when it occurs during pregnancy."

The study was published in the journal *Vaccine*.