

Pregnancy and lambing: Consideration for staff and visitors on farms.

Below is the Gov.uk, Advice to pregnant women during lambing season.

Although the number of human pregnancies affected by contact with an infected animal is very low, it is important that pregnant women are aware of the potential risks so they can take appropriate precautions.

Pregnant women should also be aware that the risks are not only confined to the spring (when the majority of lambs are born) but at any point that lambs are giving birth. The risks are also not only associated with sheep - cows and goats that have recently given birth can also carry similar infections.

To avoid the possible risk of infection, pregnant women are advised that they should:

- not help to lamb ewes, or to provide assistance with a cow that is calving or a nanny goat that is kidding.
- avoid contact with aborted or new-born lambs, calves or kids or with the afterbirth, birthing fluids or materials (e.g. bedding) contaminated by such birth products.
- avoid handling (including washing) clothing, boots or any materials that may have come into contact with animals that have recently given birth, their young or afterbirths.
- ensure partners attending lambing ewes or other animals giving birth take appropriate health and hygiene precautions, including the wearing of personal protective equipment and adequate washing to remove any potential contamination.

Pregnant women should seek medical advice if they experience fever or influenza-like symptoms, or if concerned that they could have acquired infection from a farm environment.

Farmers have a responsibility to minimise the risks to pregnant women, including members of their family, the public and professional staff visiting farms. They should consult their veterinary surgeon about suitable vaccination programmes and any other disease control measures in sheep, cattle and goats.