

PREGNANCY, INFANT FEEDING AND COVID-19

KEY MESSAGES

- Guidance is based on current knowledge of the virus and other viral respiratory infections.

Key Messages – Pregnancy

- There is currently no evidence that suggests pregnant women are at a higher risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19. There is currently no evidence that a developing child could be negatively affected by COVID-19.
- Pregnant women who are HCW, can continue to work. Appropriate personal protective equipment should be used. No additional PPE measures are required for pregnant HCW beyond those that are advised for non-pregnant HCW. Throughout pregnancy, women experience changes in their bodies that may increase the risk of other illnesses, such as viral **respiratory infections**.
- Pregnant health care personnel should follow recommended infection prevention and control practices in health care settings.
- Pregnant health care personnel should follow risk assessment and infection control guidelines for healthcare workers exposed to patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Pregnant women with comorbidities including cardiac disease, hypertension and pulmonary disease may wish to contact their prenatal care provider with respect to their risk of COVID-related morbidity and may wish to modify their risk of exposure accordingly.
- Pregnant women who are HCW, can continue to work. Appropriate personal protective equipment should be used. No additional PPE measures are required for pregnant HCW beyond those that are advised for non-pregnant HCW. As data is still developing, Health care facilities may want to consider limiting exposure of pregnant health care personnel to patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, especially during higher risk procedures (e.g., aerosol-generating procedures).
- If you are pregnant, the following advice will help reduce your risk of infection and help prevent the spread of infections:
 - wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
 - avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands;
 - avoid close contact with people who are sick;
 - when coughing or sneezing cover your mouth and nose with your arms or tissue
 - wash your hands and dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage
 - stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- clean the following high-touch surfaces frequently with regular household cleaners or diluted bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water):

- toys
 - toilets
 - phones
 - electronics
 - door handles
 - bedside tables
 - television remotes
- Contact your primary healthcare provider or TeleCare 8-1-1 if you are feeling ill.

Key – Messages Infant Feeding

- The virus has not been detected in breastmilk in limited studies of COVID-19.
- Breastfeeding is the safest way to feed your baby/young child.
- Breast milk has antibodies and immune factors that protect your baby's health.
- As with other respiratory illnesses, if you are breastfeeding you are encouraged to continue.
- Expressing breast milk, either manually or with an electric breast pump, may be done if you wash your hands before and after touching your breast, the pump or bottle parts. If you are a confirmed case or a symptomatic case under investigation, someone who is well could feed the expressed milk to your baby if you are unable.
- Whether breastfeeding or bottle feeding, if you have been diagnosed or are under investigation for COVID-19 you should take precautions to prevent transmission to your baby. You should wear a mask when near your baby, including during feeding.
- If you are feeding your infant with infant formula you should keep a two-week supply on hand. Infant formula should be prepared using strict sterilization techniques, as outlined in [How to Feed Your Baby with Infant Formula](#).
- Homemade infant formula is **not recommended**. These recipes may not provide the proper balance of nutrients that infants need. Homemade infant formulas can cause severe malnutrition and potentially fatal illness in infants.
- The following advice will help reduce your and your baby's risk of infection and help prevent the spread of infections:

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- when coughing or sneezing cover your mouth and nose with your arms or tissue
- wash your hands and dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage
- avoid contact with people who are sick
- stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- clean the following high-touch surfaces frequently with regular household cleaners or diluted bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water):
 - toys
 - toilets
 - phones and electronics
 - door handles
 - bedside tables
 - television remotes
- Contact your primary healthcare provider or TeleCare 8-1-1 if you are feeling ill.