Pregnancy and Breastfeeding During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Risk to the Pregnancy and to the Baby
Pregnant women seem to have the same risk of getting COVID-19 as an adult who is not pregnant, however:

- Pregnant women have had higher risk of severe illness when infected with viruses from the same family as COVID-19 and other viral respiratory infections like influenza.
- It is always important for pregnant women to protect themselves from illnesses.

Mother-to-Child Transmission
Transmission of COVID-19 to the baby during pregnancy is unlikely, but newborns are vulnerable to person-to-person transmission.

- COVID-19 has not been detected in maternal samples such as breast milk.

Protect Yourself from COVID-19 When You’re Pregnant

- Keep a distance of at least 6ft between you and others, and avoid people that are sick or have been exposed to the virus.
- Wash your hands often or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces, daily.

Labor and Delivery

- Discuss hospital requirements around separation of newborn babies from diagnosed COVID-19 mothers, with your doctor.
- Ask about visitation guidelines.

Breastfeeding When You Have COVID-19

- The COVID-19 virus has not been detected in breast milk, but experts do not know if the virus can be spread through breast milk if the mom is infected.
- Talk to your provider about your options for feeding your baby.

While you are sick:

- Wear a facemask and wash your hands before each feeding.
- Consider expressing breast milk or using a pump.
- Wash your hands before touching the pump or bottle parts.
- After each use of the pump, clean all parts before next use.
- If possible, have someone who is not sick feed the child.

- Remember, your provider can refer to a breastfeeding consultant who can help with breastfeeding, including use of a breast pump.

Sources:

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