



Protecting your newborn during the COVID-19 pandemic



How do I protect my baby from COVID-19 once I go home?

All caretakers and siblings should wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before holding or touching your baby. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. Clean high-touch surfaces like door handles often to reduce the risk of getting sick and spreading illness.

Your baby should be around only people who live in the house and who do not have cold, flu or COVID-19 symptoms.

How do I protect my baby if someone in my house has COVID-19?

Anyone with COVID-19 or its symptoms should stay at least 6 feet away from your baby when possible. They should wear a clean face covering and wash their hands if they must care for your baby. Contact your baby's doctor to discuss when separation and masks are no longer necessary.

Should I invite family and friends over to meet my baby?

Keep in mind that people can have COVID-19 without having symptoms, and they can be contagious several days before experiencing symptoms. Social distancing remains the best strategy for keeping your new baby safe. Use social media or apps such as FaceTime, Skype and Zoom to introduce your baby to friends and family members who do not live with you.

Should I take my baby to public places?

Generally, avoid taking your baby to public places to prevent exposing them to the virus. Take advantage of online shopping and grocery pickup.

But regular checkups with the doctor are important to make sure your baby's development is on track, to talk about nutrition and behavior, and to get the vaccines your baby needs to stay healthy.

If I get COVID-19 and I'm breastfeeding, will it transfer to the baby?

Breast milk is the best source of nutrition for most infants, and it provides protection against many illnesses. Breast milk has not been linked to transmission of COVID-19. However, studies have been limited.

If I do have COVID-19, what can I do to keep my baby safe while breastfeeding?

COVID-19 is spread through respiratory droplets that can easily be transmitted from a mother to her baby during breastfeeding. If you suspect you have the virus or are awaiting test results, take the following precautions to reduce the risk of spreading it to your baby:

- Wash hands using soap and water before touching your baby, bottles, or breast pump parts. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear a clean face covering when less than 6 feet from the baby (including when feeding at the breast or feeding from a bottle) and when expressing breast milk.
- Clean and sanitize breast pumps after each use.
- To further reduce the risk or if you're too ill to breast feed, you may choose to have someone who is not sick feed your baby.

There may be instances in which you and your baby must be separated, such as when babies require neonatal intensive care or special care services. In this event, it is recommended that you continue to pump or hand-express milk.

If you have any questions about your newborn's health during COVID-19, call your baby's doctor.

For more information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/caring-for-newborns.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/care-for-breastfeeding-women.html>