

COVID-19 Pregnancy, Birth, & Breastfeeding

COVID-19 is a new disease, and **we are still learning how it spreads**, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States.



What is the risk to pregnant women of getting COVID-19?



We don't currently know if pregnant women have a higher chance of getting sick from COVID-19 than the general public.



If they become infected, will they be more sick than other people?



It is not clear whether they are more likely to have serious complications.



Is it easier for pregnant women to become ill with the disease?

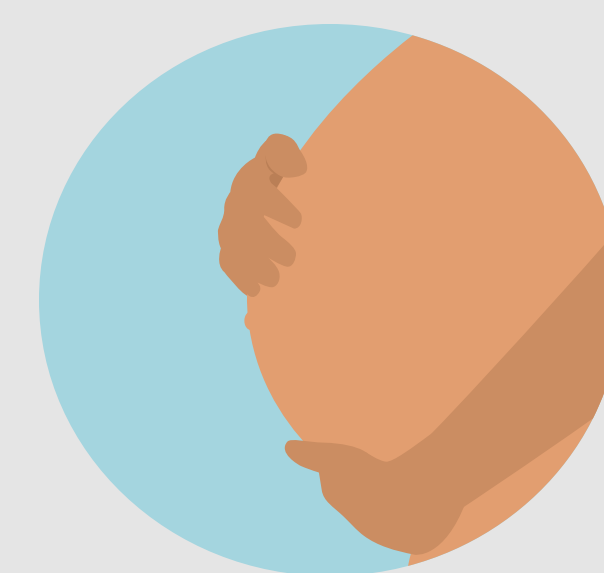


Pregnant women experience bodily changes that can increase their risk of some infections. With viruses similar to COVID-19, and other viral respiratory infections, such as influenza, women have had a higher risk of developing severe illness. It is always important for pregnant women to protect themselves from illnesses.

How can pregnant women protect themselves from getting COVID-19?

Pregnant women should do the same things as the general public to avoid infection. You can help stop the spread of COVID-19 by taking these actions:

- Practice social distancing
- Cover your cough (using your elbow is a good technique)
- Avoid people who are sick
- Clean your hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer



Can COVID-19 cause problems for a pregnancy?



We don't know at this time if COVID-19 would cause problems during pregnancy or affect the health of the baby after birth.



Can COVID-19 be passed from a pregnant woman to the fetus or newborn?



It's still unknown if a pregnant woman with COVID-19 can pass the virus to her fetus or baby during pregnancy or delivery. No infants born to mothers with COVID-19 have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. In these cases, which are a small number, the virus was not found in samples of amniotic fluid or breastmilk.



If a pregnant woman has COVID-19 during pregnancy, will it hurt the baby?



It's also unknown if any risk is posed to infants of a pregnant woman who has COVID-19. There have been a small number of reported problems with pregnancy or delivery (e.g. preterm birth) in babies born to mothers who tested positive for COVID-19 during their pregnancy. However, it is not clear that these outcomes were related to maternal infection.

Transmission of COVID-19 through breast milk:

Much is unknown about [how COVID-19 is spread](#). Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza (flu) and other respiratory pathogens spread. In limited studies on women with COVID-19 and another coronavirus infection, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV), the virus has not been detected in breast milk; however we do not know whether mothers with COVID-19 can transmit the virus via breast milk.

Guidance on breastfeeding for mothers with confirmed COVID-19 or under investigation for COVID-19:

A mother that is positive for COVID-19 should discuss with her health care provider and family about whether to start or continue breast feeding. A mother with confirmed COVID-19 or who is a symptomatic PUI should [take all possible precautions](#) to avoid spreading the virus to her infant, including washing her hands before touching the infant and wearing a face mask, if possible, while feeding at the breast. If expressing breast milk with a manual or electric breast pump, the mother should wash her hands before touching any pump or bottle parts and follow [recommendations](#) for proper pump cleaning after each use. If possible, consider having someone who is well, feed the expressed breast milk to the infant.

What is known about COVID-19

How it spreads:

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 1 meter (3 feet) away from a person who is sick.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Tiredness
- Dry Cough
- Difficulty Breathing

Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

Insurance Information



Medical Insurer Guidance on Prenatal and Infant Care Visits:

The Governor of the State of New Mexico has issued a public health order that requires delay of three months of all non-essential health care. However, prenatal and post-natal care are exempt. When in doubt, patients should call their providers to determine what to do about appointments. The following is general guidance from the Medicaid Managed Care Organizations.

PRESBYTERIAN:

Pregnant mothers may still attend routine OB visits. However, they are asked to go their appointments alone and may be accompanied by security to their appointments to ensure social distancing (mainly at hospitals). During labor and delivery, they are currently allowed only one person in the room; that person will not be allowed to come & go.

BCBSNM:

Some visits are being completed virtually with the OB providers, which is approved. Obviously that won't work for everybody or all visits so outside of that I think it will be a case by case basis between the provider and the Member and the risk/concerns revolving around the Member. We would recommend Member's call ahead to the provider's office to determine if the provider wants to keep the visit face to face or if virtual is feasible/recommended.

WSCC:

Western Sky Community Care is recommending for members to keep and attend their prenatal appointments when possible. However, since each provider has their own guidelines, WSCC recommends that members contact the provider directly, in advance of appointments or when making appointments, for further instructions.