



## **COVID-19**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PREGNANT AND BREASTFEEDING WOMEN**

#### **I am pregnant. Am I at increased risk of COVID-19?**

At present, there is no evidence to suggest pregnant women are at greater risk of COVID-19 than the general population. Nonetheless, pregnancy is a time of immune system change so pregnant women should continue with standard precautionary measures such as avoiding crowded places, limiting use of public transport where possible, washing their hands regularly with soap and water, and avoiding touching their face.

#### **Should I still be attending my antenatal clinic visits in light of the COVID-19 epidemic?**

Yes, it is important that pregnant women continue to attend their routine antenatal visits to ensure mom and baby's health are monitored and any chronic conditions are well managed. When attending health facilities, moms should ensure they continue to take all the standard precautions such as handwashing or handsanitising before and after entering the health facility, avoiding touching their face, and coughing or sneezing into a tissue.

#### **Can COVID-19 be transmitted through breastmilk?**

There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be transmitted through breastmilk. The benefits of breastfeeding far outweigh the risks and new mothers are encouraged to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months of their child's life as long as they are able thereafter.

#### **I have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, but do not have symptoms, can I continue to breastfeed?**

Yes, if you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19 you can continue to breastfeed but must take the standard precautions such as washing your hands with soap and water before and after holding your baby, covering your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and regularly cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that the baby is in contact with.

#### **I am pregnant and have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. I have no symptoms, but I am worried something might happen to my baby. What should I do?**

There is no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 increases this risk of miscarriage or preterm birth; however, to keep yourself healthy continue to practice the standard precautions such as washing your hands frequently with soap and water, avoiding touching your face, limiting the use of public transport, and avoiding public gatherings. If you do develop symptoms contact your healthcare practitioner or call the 24-hour COVID-19 helpline on 0800 029 999.

### **I have tested positive for COVID-19 and am pregnant. Is my baby at risk too?**

Because this virus was only recently discovered, we are still learning about the potential impact on the unborn child. In China, pregnant women who were in their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters saw no increased risk of birth defects, stillbirth or miscarriage. Additional data are being but for now, there are no data to suggest that COVID-19 can be spread from the mother to the baby when pregnant. New data are available weekly so please discuss with your healthcare provider if you have concerns. Also, look out for danger signs in pregnancy such as bleeding, waters breaking before getting contractions, no movements from baby for four hours or more, severe lower abdominal pains, fits and fast or difficulty in breathing. If you have any of these, consult with your healthcare provider immediately.

Sources for answers:

- WHO Clinical management of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) when COVID-19 disease is suspected-Interim guidance 13 March 2020
- [Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists- Corona Virus \(COVID-19\) infection in pregnancy v. 18 March 2020](#)

