

# Information about COVID-19 for Pregnant or Breastfeeding Women

We are committed to make sure you are safe and healthy as your pregnancy healthcare provider. We want to share information about how to care for yourself while pregnant during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

You may have some questions about what to do during this time. **We hope this handout will help answer your questions. There are local, state, and national resource to help keep you up-to-date as information changes.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Question 1: What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new coronavirus and it has started a worldwide outbreak. COVID-19 is similar to the more dangerous coronaviruses like SARS and MERS. Usually someone with a coronavirus will have an illness in the upper lungs called a respiratory illness.

### Question 2: How does COVID-19 spread to people?

You can get COVID-19 **if you are within 6 feet of a person** with this illness. Little droplets with the virus can land on you when the sick person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in your mouth or nose if you are nearby. You can also possibly breathe the virus into your lungs.

### Question 3: What should I do if I think I have COVID-19?

**Call your pregnancy provider right away if you have:**

- A fever of 100°F or 37.8°C
- Trouble breathing
- A cough
- Any other flu-like symptoms

We are telling our patients to go to the UNMH Respiratory Care Center (RCC). The RCC is in Room 1500 in the Bill and Barbara Richardson Pavilion Room (BBRP). We work closely with Respiratory Care Center team to make sure you to have the best possible care during your pregnancy.

**Call the Triage Logic Line at 1-877-925-6877 with your pregnancy questions or worries.**

**We are learning more about COVID-19 every day.**

We may need to change this guidance as we learn more about the virus.

This will help to keep you safe and healthy.



## Question 4: How should I protect myself from COVID-19 in my everyday life?

Follow these steps to reduce your risk of getting sick from COVID-19.

### Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with **soap and water** for at **least 20 seconds**. Do this right away if you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Use a hand sanitizer that contains **at least 60% alcohol** if you are not near soap and water. Put the hand sanitizer on all parts of your hands. Rub your hands together until they feel dry.
- **Don't touch your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

### Stay home

- **Stay home** as much as possible!
- Practice social distancing between yourself and other people. This means you should keep a distance of **at least 6 feet** between yourself and others.
- Don't go near people **who are sick**. This is very important to stay away from older family members or someone with a health problem like COPD, cancer, diabetes, heart or blood problems, and any autoimmune diseases.
- Avoid being groups of **5 or more** people from outside your home.

### Clean and disinfect your home

We know that COVID-19 can stay alive for hours and up to days on different types of surfaces. Cleaning regularly will help stop the spread of COVID-19 in your home and community.

- **Clean and disinfect areas that are often touched every day.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **Always clean any dirty surface in your home.** Use detergent or soap and water before you disinfect it.
- **You can disinfect with most EPA-registered household disinfectants** or alcohol solutions. Make sure you are using the right disinfectant for the type of surface.
- You can **make a homemade disinfectant** from watered down bleach. Mix 1/3 cup of bleach into a gallon of water. This is not safe of some surfaces.



Watch this handwashing video at <https://youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo>.



### Cover your cough and sneeze

- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue** when you cough or sneeze. You can also use the inside of your elbow.
- **Throw away** used tissues.
- **Immediately wash your hands.** Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



### Stay home if you are sick

- **Stay home** if you are sick. You can leave your home to get medical care.
- Call your pregnancy healthcare provider for more guidance.
- Learn more about staying home if you are sick at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>



### Only wear a facemask if you are sick

- Wear a facemask when you are around other people like sharing a room or car.
- Wear a facemask before you enter any medical office or hospital.
- If you can't wear a facemask for some reason – make sure to cover your coughs and sneezes.
  - Anyone caring for of you should wear a facemask when they enter your room.
- **You don't need to wear a facemask if you are not sick.** Save face masks for sick people, caregivers, and healthcare workers.



### Question 5: Are pregnant women more likely to get COVID-19 than non-pregnant women?

We don't think pregnant women are more likely to get sick compared to non-pregnant women. Most people with COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms. This can be a cough and fever. Some young and healthy people – under 45 years old – can get severe symptoms like not being able to take a full and deep breath. They may need to go to the hospital for medical care.

## Question 6: Are pregnant women at higher risk for problems in their pregnancy with COVID-19?

We know some viral illnesses like the influenza (flu) can be worse if you are pregnant. Pregnant women who get the flu can have complications during their pregnancy. **We know that you can have pregnancy complications if you get really sick with COVID-19.** If you have mild or no symptoms with COVID-19, you may have fewer problems with your pregnancy.

## Question 7: Can I pass COVID-19 to my unborn baby or my baby during delivery?

Sometimes moms can pass a virus to their baby before birth through their placenta. This is known as vertical transmission. We don't know if this can happen with COVID-19. Sometimes moms can pass a virus to their baby during delivery. This is known as perinatal transmission. This happens when the baby comes in contact with the mom's blood or vaginal secretions. **COVID-19 has not been found in amniotic fluid from the limited information we know.**

## Question 8: Can I pass COVID-19 to my baby through breastmilk?

Breastfeeding has not passed the virus to babies through breast milk based on what we know. Antibodies against COVID-19 have been found in breast milk. These antibodies may help to protect your baby from this virus.

If you have **tested positive** for COVID-19:

- Always wash your breast and hands before breastfeeding your baby or pumping milk.
- Only use 1 breast pump while you are sick. You should label this breast pump to keep it separate from the others.
- Wear a surgical mask while breastfeeding.



## Question 9: How should I get ready to give birth to my baby during the COVID-19 outbreak?

You may want to stop working or work from home for **at least 2 weeks before your due date**. This is around 37 weeks. This may reduce your risk of getting COVID-19 and coming to the hospital sick. Your due date or the way you give birth to your baby should not change if you are healthy.

**Before you come to the hospital:** Tell your pregnancy healthcare provider if you or your support person has COVID-19 symptoms.

## Question 10: What should I do if I am a pregnant or lactating healthcare worker or provider at UNMH?

You can continue to work in our clinical settings. You must follow the standard contact and airborne precautions. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UNM Hospitals, and UNM Health Sciences recommends you –

- Limit your exposure to higher risk work like aerosol generating procedures. This includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation, intubation, extubation, bronchoscopy, nebulizer therapy, sputum induction, and nasal swabs.
- Limit your exposure to confirmed or suspected for COVID-19 patients.
- Follow the **strict infection control guidelines** for contact and airborne precautions for COVID-19 patients.
- Use eye protection, gown, gloves and a respirator for **close contact with COVID-19 patients**.
- **If you are at work** – notify your supervisor right away if:
  - You think you were exposed to COVID-19 at work, home or feel like you are getting sick.
  - Call your specific occupational health unit for more information if you can't reach your supervisor.
  - You should call your pregnancy healthcare provider.
- **If you are home** – Stay home from work if:
  - You have a temperature of 100°F or 37.8°C or higher.
  - You have a cough stomach or digestion problems.
  - It is hard to take a full deep breath.

Call your supervisor and your pregnancy healthcare provider!

Our recommendations are based from the CDC's risk assessment and infection control guidelines.

Healthcare **close contact** means you are within 6 feet for a long period of time or for greater than a few minutes.

## Find Out More

You can use these websites for day-to-day updates and learn more about how to keep you and your family safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.

### New Mexico Department of Health's (NMDOH) COVID-19 Information

- Call the COVID-19 Hotline at **1-855-600-3453** or
- Go to <https://cv.nmhealth.org/> for information about NM.

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's COVID-19 Information

- Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- Pregnancy and Breastfeeding: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/pregnancy-faq.html>

UNM's COVID-19 website: <http://www.unm.edu/coronavirus/>

