

Scripting for PUI/Covid for Maternal Providers

Approved 4-13-20 MBU/NBN/MCH Medical and Unit Directors

UNM Policy gives 2 options, based on CDC guidelines which were adopted by AAP as well:

- Mom and baby separation as “preferred” policy with healthy caregiver to care for baby while wearing PPE & okay to give EBM
- Rooming in of mother and baby with health caregiver to care for baby as per above or if not available Mom to care for baby with appropriate PPE. Mom and baby beds 6 feet apart.

CDC updated its guidelines on April 4 including reconsideration of recommendation for mother infant separation and explicitly stating:

The determination of whether or not to separate a mother with known or suspected COVID-19 and her infant should be made on a case-by-case basis using shared decision-making between the mother and the clinical team. Considerations in this decision include:

- The clinical condition of the mother and of the infant
- SARS-CoV-2 testing results of mother (confirmed vs. suspected) and infant (a positive infant test would negate the need to separate)
- Desire to feed at the breast
- Facility capacity to accommodate separation or colocation
- The ability to maintain separation upon discharge
- Other risks and benefits of temporary separation of a mother with known or suspected COVID-19 and her infant

If separation is not undertaken, other measures to reduce the risk of transmission from mother to infant could include the following, again, utilizing shared decision-making:

- Using engineering controls like physical barriers (e.g., a curtain between the mother and newborn) and keeping the newborn ≥ 6 feet away from the mother.
- Mothers who choose to feed at the breast should put on a face mask and practice hand hygiene before each feeding.
- If the mother is not breastfeeding and no other healthy adult is present in the room to care for the newborn, a mother with known or suspected COVID-19 should put on a face mask and practice hand hygiene¹ before each feeding or other close contact with her newborn.
- The facemask should remain in place during contact with the newborn. These practices should continue while the mother is on Transmission-Based Precautions in a healthcare facility.

The WHO, the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (RCOG; aka British ACOG), and Union of European Neonatal & Perinatal Societies, amongst others recommend:

- For Covid-19 + or PUIs asymptomatic or paucisymptomatic recommended rooming in, direct breastfeeding, and “strict measures of infection control”
- If Mom has severe respiratory symptoms and is too sick to care for baby, temporary separation is recommended pending testing. If test negative and Mom able, return to rooming in.

Why do the WHO and European health authorities recommend not routinely separating mom and baby?

- No evidence of transplacental transmission
- No evidence of transmission via breast milk
- Infants with COVID-19 have done well and not required intensive care (1 reported death worldwide)
- Separation of baby and Mom and decreased breastfeeding might expose infants to greater risk of infection with other pathogens more likely to cause serious illness

Families should weigh risks and benefits of rooming in vs. separation and make informed decision based on:

- How sick is Mom
- Is there a healthy caregiver to be with baby
- How important is breastfeeding to family – pumping may not stimulate sufficient milk supply
- Bonding with baby
- Ability to maintain separation once Mom and baby are home

If family chooses rooming in for Mom and Baby

- Keep beds 6 feet apart with curtain or room divider if available
- Mom wears mask and washes hands before feeding, touching baby
- No visitors (wouldn't be allowed either way outside of healthy caregiver/Mom support person)

References

CDC, “Considerations for Inpatient Obstetric Healthcare Settings,” with April 4, 2020 revisions. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/inpatient-obstetric-healthcare-guidance.html>.

Davanzo, R, “Breastfeeding and Coronavirus Disease-2019. Ad interim indications of the Italian Society of Neonatology endorsed by the Union of European Neonatal & Perinatal Societies. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/mcn.13010>.

Bartick, “COVID-19: Separating Infected Mothers from Newborns: Weighing the Risks and Benefits,” March 31, 2020. <https://trends.hms.harvard.edu/2020/03/31/covid-19-separating-infected-mothers-from-newborns-weighing-the-risks-and-benefits/>.

