



# COVID-19, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

COVID-19 information and guidelines are rapidly changing. For the latest on the illness, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [website](#). For the most up-to-date information from TRICARE, visit their [COVID-19 page](#).

## What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new coronavirus. COVID-19 is spread mainly through respiratory droplets when an infected individual coughs, sneezes or talks and someone else is in close contact (6 feet or closer). Infection occurs when these droplets are breathed in or ingested. Transmission may also occur when someone touches something that has the virus on it and then touches their mouth, nose or eyes. COVID-19 is spread between people.



## What are the symptoms?

There are a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. For the most updated list of symptoms, [go here](#).

## Am I at greater risk to get COVID-19 because I am pregnant?

New information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that pregnant patients may be at increased risk for certain manifestations of severe illness due to COVID-19, such as intensive care unit admission and mechanical ventilation. Importantly, the available data also suggest that the overall risk of these clinical interventions remains low, and that pregnant patients do not appear to be at increased risk of death associated with COVID-19 compared with nonpregnant patients in the same age group.

It's important to follow the guidelines. This includes avoiding others who are sick or have been exposed to the virus, practicing social distancing, following proper handwashing procedures, and frequently disinfecting surfaces that are commonly touched.



## If I am breastfeeding and have COVID-19, can I pass COVID-19 to my baby?

Few studies have suggested the presence of novel coronavirus in breast milk, however, at present, data are not sufficient to conclude vertical transmission of COVID-19 through breastfeeding. It is important to talk with your health care provider about breastfeeding and your situation. You should still follow guidelines like wearing a mask and washing your hands before and after each feeding, until more is known.

## How can I stay physically healthy right now while I am pregnant?

Pregnant women can stay healthy by following the usual recommendations during pregnancy, including:

- [Eating healthy meals](#).
- [Exercising regularly](#).
- [Getting plenty of sleep](#).
- Avoiding alcohol and drugs:
  - <https://www.acog.org/patient-resources/faqs/pregnancy/tobacco-alcohol-drugs-and-pregnancy>



- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/alcohol-use.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/substance-abuse/substance-abuse-during-pregnancy.htm>
- It is also important to follow any local guidelines or restrictions on face masks, social distancing, movement or travel, and public spaces.



### How can I manage stress and anxiety?

Some pregnant and postpartum women may be feeling fear, uncertainty, stress, or anxiety because of COVID-19. Reaching out to friends and family during this time may help. Phone calls, texts, and online chats are safe ways to stay connected. You can also reach out to programs like Military One Source for [non-medical counseling and support](#) to help cope with stress and for [new parent support](#).

Here are some resources that you and your MTF, families and those in your community may find helpful:

- **CDC Stress and Coping:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- **Veterans Affairs Managing Stress associated with COVID-19 Outbreak:** [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID\\_managing\\_stress.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_managing_stress.asp)
- **World Health Organization (WHO):** [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a_2)
- **Video Coping with COVID Stress:** <https://vimeo.com/407620999>
- **NMCPHC HPW Relaxation:** <https://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/psychological-emotional-wellbeing/Pages/relaxation.aspx>
- **Help Guide Coronavirus Anxiety Coping with Stress, Fear, Worry:** <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/coronavirus-anxiety.htm>
- **Mental Health America Information and Resources:** <https://mhanational.org/covid19>
- **Military OneSource has many resources on Stress and COVID:** <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a rapidly evolving situation, and as new research and data become available, clinical care recommendations should be refined to reflect the most current information. This page is not meant to give specific medical advice and is for informational reference only. Medical advice should be provided by your doctor or other health care professionals.

