

Mom

Breastfeeding and coronavirus: Here's what nursing parents need to know



By Karissa Binkley, Second Nature Lactation

It can be frustrating and scary as a new parent to navigate our current health climate. Trying to get the most up-to-date and reliable data can be a challenge amid a sea of misinformation. That's why I wanted to share some helpful information and credible websites to turn to pertaining to lactation.

Continue breastfeeding

It is highly unlikely that breast milk carries the coronavirus. In fact, similar strains have never been detected. Breast milk carries the nutrition, antibodies and hydration a baby needs to fight illness. Practice good hygiene such as proper hand-washing, coughing into your elbow, and keeping a reasonable social distance from others outside of the home. Avoid contact with those exposed.

If you have COVID-19, continue breastfeeding

It is important that you take every measure to not expose baby to your respiratory droplets. Wear a mask and wash hands. If you are infected, it is likely that your baby has already been exposed to the virus, and breast milk will offer benefits to their immune system through the antibodies that you produce.

Wash pump parts and bottles thoroughly

If you decide to pump, be sure to wash all parts of the pump and collection bottle carefully. Have a non-infected person feed baby. Be sure to [follow milk safety guidelines](#) when pumping.

Avoid contact

If someone in your home has been exposed to the virus, it is important that you and baby avoid all contact with this person. If they test positive, the local Health Department will guide you and your family on quarantine protocol. Continue to breastfeed.

Be careful about medications

Please do not take herbs or supplements without calling Infant Risk Center, a leader in medication safety during pregnancy and breastfeeding at Texas Tech. Unsubstantiated claims about supplements boosting the immune system or even preventing coronavirus are running rampant. PLEASE call 806-352-2519 or visit [Infant Risk's website](#) to discuss compatibility with breastfeeding.

Take a breath

This a good time to practice taking it easy. Most events have been canceled and people are staying home. Take a moment to be mindful of this down time with your family. Turn off the news, put down your phone, and get to your know your baby. This will pass