

## KNOW

### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, a new strain of coronavirus that was previously unknown.

#### *How does the virus spread?*

The virus is mainly transmitted via small respiratory droplets, through sneezing, coughing or when people interact with each other for some time in close proximity or closed spaces. These droplets can be inhaled or can land on surfaces that others come into contact with and are then infected by when they touch their nose, mouth or eyes.

#### *What are the symptoms?*

People infected with COVID-19 can have no symptoms or show only mild ones. In some cases symptoms can be more severe, especially for people with underlying health conditions. The symptoms of COVID-19 include a combination of:

- Cough;
- Fever;
- Muscle pain;
- Tiredness;
- Changes in taste or smell;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Rash;
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (vomiting or diarrhea).

#### *Are pregnant women more at risk than others?*

The evidence available so far indicates that pregnant or recently pregnant women are not more likely to contract COVID-19 than the general population. Pregnant women appear to experience similar symptoms (cough, fever, headache, changes in taste and smell, difficulty breathing) as other adults with COVID-19. Therefore, it is important that antenatal care continues as planned.

Relatively few babies have been born to mothers with COVID-19 infection, and no major risks have been identified to date. Babies may show mild symptoms of COVID-19. Studies continue to monitor both mothers and babies.

#### *What do I do if I fall ill?*

If you become ill with a cough and fever or experience any of the other symptoms of COVID-19, you should first call your health provider for instructions.

- If you have mild symptoms, you can safely remain at home and request instructions from your antenatal health provider on how to proceed with care appointments and/or delivery plans.
- If you experience prolonged symptoms or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care promptly.



Insert national link here  
[www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-pandemic](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-pandemic)

## KNOW, PREPARE, PROTECT

### Mother-to-child transmission of COVID-19

## Transmission to the baby

To reduce the risk of transmission to the baby, mothers with either suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 should practise simple measures, such as hand hygiene and the use of a face mask during breastfeeding.

The separation of mother and child should be minimised as possible, but if done it is recommended the mother be helped to maintain milk production through manual or mechanical extraction, which must be carried out following the same hygiene rules.

## Breast feeding

The virus responsible for COVID-19 has been detected in breast milk; however, there is no firm evidence that the disease can be transmitted through breastfeeding. Given the scientific information currently available and the protective properties of breast milk, breastfeeding should be started and/or maintained even through expressed breast milk, for all women with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 who are in good clinical condition and wish to breastfeed.

For further information:

[national website]

[www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-pandemic](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-pandemic)

## PREPARE

What should you do if you are a pregnant woman?

### How you can prepare yourself:

- Educate yourself about COVID-19 from trusted sources.
- Keep physically active to ensure good physical condition.
- Discuss your concerns about COVID-19 with your antenatal care provider.
- Call your antenatal care provider to plan how to proceed with antenatal appointments and your delivery plan, including in the event you become ill with COVID-19.

### In case of stay-home recommendations or restrictions in your area:

- Be sure that you have some recommended over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (e.g. tissues, thermometer) to treat fever.
- If taking any prescription medicines, refill them in advance, or consider using a mail order for your medications.
- Have sufficient groceries and household items, enough for 2-4 weeks. Prepare gradually and avoid panic-buying.
- Activate your social network. Contact family, friends, neighbours or community healthcare workers in advance and make joint plans on what to do when COVID-19 is spreading in your community or if you become ill.
- Follow the instructions from your national authorities on how to prepare for emergencies.
- Continue to practise general hygiene.

## PROTECT

How you can protect yourself and your baby



Clean your hands frequently. Wash your hands with soap and water or, if not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Before eating;
- Before and after contact with the child;
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing;
- After using the toilet;
- After having been in public places;
- After having touched surfaces in public places;
- After having touched other people.



Avoid contact with sick people.



Avoid touching your face, nose and eyes.



Avoid meetings, events and other social gatherings in areas with ongoing community transmission, particularly indoors.



Practise physical distancing if COVID-19 is spreading in your community:

- Avoid crowds, especially in confined and poorly ventilated spaces;
- Do your grocery shopping at off-peak hours;
- Avoid using public transport during rush hours;
- Exercise outdoors instead of indoor settings.



Use a medical face mask during breastfeeding.