

BREASTFEEDING AND COVID-19

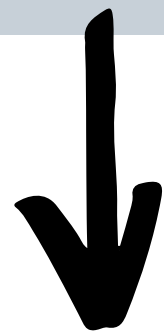
A guide for professionals



DOES THE MOTHER HAVE SYMPTOMS?

Fever or one or more of the following: Cough, difficult breathing or shortness of breath or gastrointestinal symptoms.

Yes



No



Encourage to breastfeed, and protect herself!



- Wash hands with soap frequently, for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching own or baby's face.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing and sneezing.
- Don't allow anyone who is ill to visit mother and infant.
- Avoid crowds, consider self-isolation.
- Get information from trusted sources only.

1

ASSESS THE MOTHER AND INFANT

Take infection control precautions.

2

ENCOURAGE BREASTFEEDING -DON'T SEPARATE INFANT AND MOTHER!

COVID-19 is not transmitted to the infant via breast milk. Make sure a healthy adult cares for the infant's other needs. Remind mother of hygiene measures, such as washing hands with soap before and after feeding and wearing a mask while breastfeeding. If necessary, isolate mother-infant dyad together.

3

IF MOTHER IS UNABLE TO BREASTFEED

Enable mother to express breast milk 8-12 times/24 hours, to maintain milk production. Have a healthy adult feed and care for the infant. Apply all general infection prevention measures. Wash and sterilise equipment after each use and do not share equipment between mothers. If mother-infant dyad is separated, ensure mental health and psychosocial support.

4

ENSURE SAFE SKIN-TO-SKIN CONTACT AND ROOMING IN

This helps to maintain a bond between mother and infant, and can keep up milk production. Bonding improves relationships, mental health and overall well-being. Encourage safe interaction, such as eye contact and chats even when mother is wearing a mask.

Please note:

Information about COVID-19 transmission is emerging daily. These guidelines are based on latest evidence during publication time.

EVIDENCE SUMMARY BY:

Lubbe W, Botha E, Niela-Vilen H & Reimers P.

Breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic – a literature review for clinical practice. 2020.

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