

COVID-19



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH



NIGERIA CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Guidelines for Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers



NCDC Toll-free Number: **080097000010** SMS: **0809 955 5577** WhatsApp: **0708 711 0839**

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GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANT WOMEN AND NURSING MOTHERS

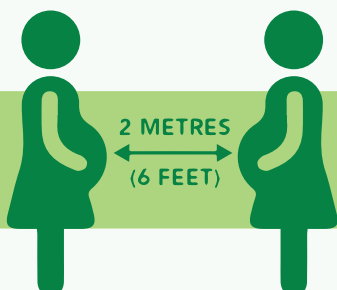
COVID-19 and your pregnancy

It is not currently known if pregnant women are more susceptible to COVID-19 than the general public, nor whether they are more likely to have serious illness as a result. Based on available information, pregnant women seem to be at equal risk as other adults.

However, it is known that the bodily changes that occur during pregnancy, may put expectant women at increased risk for some infections. Pregnant women have had a higher risk of severe illness when infected with viruses from the same family as COVID-19 and other viral respiratory infections, such as influenza

Therefore, pregnant women should take the same precautions as the general public to avoid COVID-19 infection. Meanwhile the care of the pregnant woman and the newborn should continue, and they should protect themselves from COVID-19 by taking the following actions:

- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with a bent elbow or tissue (throw tissue into closed bin immediately after use)
- Avoid contact with people who are sick or who have been exposed to the virus
- Maintain the WHO-standard of physical distancing with a minimum of 2 metres between you and the next person
- If physical distancing is impossible to achieve, wear a face mask
- Clean your hands often using soap and running water



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or frequently clean them using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on a daily basis
- If possible, stay home for the entire duration of the pregnancy except for ante-natal care hospital visits
- Eat healthy and nutritious meals
- Ensure adequate bed rest

Advice for pregnant women with suspected or confirmed coronavirus infection

If you think you may have coronavirus, or you have been exposed, are pregnant and you have either a high temperature or a new, continuous cough:

- You should stay at home for **14 days**. Do not go to the hospital but contact your doctor and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) toll free number **0800-9700 0010** or state epidemiologist immediately. You will be assessed in line with current case definition guidelines set out by the NCDC.
- You should contact your clinic to inform them that you have symptoms suggestive of coronavirus, particularly if you have any routine appointments in the next 7 days.
- They should postpone routine antenatal visits until after the isolation period is over and arrange the right place and time for you to come for your visits. You should not attend a routine clinic. There may be a need for them to reduce the number of antenatal visits you have



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Breastfeeding if you have coronavirus infection

- Breast milk provides protection against many illnesses and is the best source of nutrition for infants
- You, along with your family and healthcare providers, should decide whether and how to start or continue breastfeeding
- In limited studies, COVID-19 has not been detected in breast milk; however, it is not known for sure whether mothers with COVID-19 can spread the virus via breast milk
- If you are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 infection and choose to breastfeed:
 - o Maintain strict hygiene and wash your hands before each feed
 - o Wear a facemask
- Another good option is to pump or express by hand the breastmilk and have someone who is not sick feed it to the baby. If you pump or hand express your milk, make sure you wash your hands before doing so



Be aware that media speculation is rife about COVID-19 and not everything you read in the newspapers or online or hear is accurate or verified. The release of trusted and accurate information will always be released by the Ministry of Health or Nigeria Centre for Disease Control. You can find the latest information and advice by contacting NCDC on:

- *NCDC Toll-free Number:* **0800-9700 0010**
- *Website for additional resources:*
<https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/guidelines.php>
- *Twitter and Facebook:* **@NCDGgov**

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