

CORONAVIRUS

COVID-19

Are you allowed to breastfeed if you are (possibly) infected with COVID-19?

Based on the current scientific knowledge about the new coronavirus COVID-19 it is **safe** to breastfeed. The virus does not seem to appear in breast milk. Moreover, breast milk contains a lot of substances that will help protect your baby against infections.

Additional hygienic measures are necessary to make sure you do no infect the baby during feeding.



You are experiencing **respiratory symptoms** (coughing, a cold, a sore throat) or a **fever** OR you are not ill yourself, but you have been **in contact with someone with a proven COVID-19 infection**.



- Wash your hands under running water and with soap for at least 20 seconds. Dry them with clean material (paper tissue, a clean towel or a bit of kitchen roll). As an alternative you can also disinfect your hands with a **hydro-alcoholic solution** (at least 60% alcohol).
- Wash your breast, nipple and areola with a paper tissue, clean wash cloth or a clean compress, dampened under running water.
- Put your baby in its own bed, at least **two metres** away from your own bed.
- Wear a **mouth mask** in case of close contact and when feeding the baby. Never cover the baby's face with a mouth mask.



You have a **confirmed COVID-19 infection**.



- You have to self-isolate from other members of your family or co-inhabitants for at least 7 days after the start of the COVID-19 symptoms or longer if you continue to have symptoms. A healthy person will look after your baby.
- You only have contact with your baby when you're breastfeeding. Wear a **mouth mask** when you are feeding the baby. Never cover the baby's face with a mouth mask.
- All surfaces and washable materials you have been in contact with need to be disinfected with 4% bleach solution (put 40 ml bleach, or four tablespoons, in a 1 litre bottle and fill with tap water). If you use a breast pump, you need to disinfect all contact surfaces after every use.

You would rather express milk?



There may be various reasons for expressing breast milk. When you are seriously ill because of the COVID-19 infection, it is important to start or keep the milk production going by expressing the milk temporarily.

The expressed milk can be given to your baby by a **healthy person**. Hand and breast hygiene are also important when you express milk.

The hospital provides a fixed breast pump and disposable pump sets.

At home you have to disassemble all parts of the breast pump **to clean it**. First you wash everything with **warm water and washing-up liquid**.

After that you **sterilise** all parts using either of these 2 methods:

→ **Sterilise in water**

- Put a sufficiently big cooking pot with water on the cooker.
- Bring water to the boil.
- Put the washed-up breast shields in the boiling water and let everything boil for three minutes.
- Use tongs to take all the different parts out of the water.
- Put them on a clean towel and let them dry to the air for a bit.
- Cover them with a clean second towel.

→ **Use a steriliser**

- Follow the instructions that go with the appliance.