



YOUR QUESTION

Is breastfeeding recommended in mothers with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

What is the best evidence currently?

The most recent evidence suggests that the benefits of breastfeeding for the baby may well outweigh the apparently slight risk of transmission via breast milk.

There has only been one study to date that has tested samples of breast milk from mothers with COVID-19. No virus was found in the milk, although the milk of only 6 women was tested.

However, precautions need to be taken to prevent infection occurring during the process of breastfeeding. This should include hand hygiene before and after and the mother wearing a face-mask during each feed.

Some authors suggest that expressing milk may be safer. Expressing should be implemented to maintain the mother's milk supply.

Other authors suggest that the lack of clear evidence suggests that an infected mother should avoid breastfeeding, or even expressing breast milk.



SOURCES*

Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html#anchor_1584169714 [Accessed 23/03/2020]. Health Protection Surveillance Centre. <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/pregnancyandpostpartumguidance/Guidance%20for%20management%20of%20suspected%20COVID-19%20in%20pregnant%20and%20post%20partum%20period%20V1.pdf>. [Accessed 25/03/2020]. UpToDate. <https://www.uptodate.com/contents/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>. [Accessed 24/03/2020]. Morris et al. (2020). <https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/guidelines/2020-03-21-covid19-pregnancy-guidance-2118.pdf>. [Accessed 24/03/2020]. British Columbia Centre for Disease Control. http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/CD%20Manual/Chapter%201%20-%20CDC/2019-nCoV-Interim_Guidelines.pdf. [Accessed 24/02/2020]. Calda et al. https://www.actualgyn.com/pdf/cz_2020_242.pdf. [Accessed 23/03/2020]. Wang et al. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32154287>. [Accessed 23/03/2020]. Li et al. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32132140>. [Accessed 23/03/2020]. Chen et al. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32151335>. [Accessed 24/03/2020]. Rasmussen. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32105680>. [Accessed 24/03/2020]. Favre et al <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32142639>. [Accessed 24/03/2020]. Jie Qiao et al. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32151334>. [Accessed 24/03/2020].

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The following PICO(T) was used as a basis for the evidence summary:

	Mothers with confirmed or suspected COVID-19
	Breast feeding
	Risk of infection to the neonate



The following search strategy was used:

- 1 exp Coronavirinae/
- 2 covid-19.ab,ti.
- 3 coronavirus.ab,ti.
- 4 "corona virus".ab,ti.
- 5 (wuhan adj3 virus).ab,ti.
- 6 ("2019-nCoV" or "2019 ncov").ab,ti.
- 7 "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2".ab,ti.
- 8 ("2019" and (new or novel) and coronavirus).ab,ti.
- 9 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8
- 10 ("breast feed*" or breastfeed* or "breast fed" or breastfed or lactat* or "breast milk" or breastmilk).ti,ab.
- 11 exp breast feeding/
- 12 exp breast milk/
- 13 10 or 11 or 12
- 14 limit 13 to yr="2019 -Current"

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