

Breastfeeding when COVID-19 Positive

- There is limited information about breastfeeding as it relates to COVID-19. In other coronavirus infections, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), the virus has not been detected in breastmilk.
- Breastmilk provides protection against many illnesses.
- Breastfeeding is recommended even if you have COVID-19 as there is no evidence that the virus is transmitted in breast milk.
- Take all [self-isolation](#) precautions and [wear a face mask](#) while breastfeeding to avoid spreading the virus to your baby.
- If you sneeze or cough over your exposed chest/breasts, wash the area with soap and water before breastfeeding or expressing your milk.
- If you feel too sick to breastfeed or are separated from your baby, you can [hand express](#) or pump your milk at least eight times in 24 hours, and once during the night, to maintain your breastmilk supply. The expressed breastmilk may be fed to your baby from a cup, spoon or bottle by someone who is well.
- If expressing breast milk, wash your hands and put on a face mask before touching any pump or bottle parts. After each use, clean the pump according to manufacturer's instructions
- Do not use borrowed or second-hand breast pumps unless they are hospital grade rental pumps (follow hospital's instructions). Some used or second-hand breast pumps have internal parts that are difficult to properly sterilize.
- If a bottle is used to feed expressed breast milk, ensure that it is properly [sterilized](#).
- All caregivers must practice good hygiene measures, including hand washing and wearing a face mask, before touching the baby, breast pump, or feeding bottles and equipment.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

More information

Learn more about [breastfeeding](#) and [COVID-19 and breastfeeding](#).

For more information about COVID-19, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.