

## COVID-19 and Pregnancy

There is limited information available about the effect of COVID-19 on pregnant individuals and babies. However, there is information about pregnancy and other respiratory viruses, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), which we can learn from.

- Respiratory infections during pregnancy are a concern as pregnant individuals are more likely to have serious symptoms and may need to be hospitalized.
- Protect yourself by practicing [physical distancing](#), avoid being exposed to the virus, and [wear a mask or face covering](#) in indoor public spaces and when you can't keep physical distance. The use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all indoor public spaces, as per a new City of Toronto [bylaw](#).
- Consider downloading Health Canada's [COVID Alert](#) app so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.
- Pregnancy does not seem to make a COVID-19 infection worse and does not seem to cause birth defects.
- Some pregnant individuals have gone into [early labour](#) (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) due to exposure to the virus.
- To date, most infants born to individuals who had COVID-19 during pregnancy were born healthy and at term.
- If you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive or has symptoms of COVID-19 or if you have symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and self-isolate and [get tested](#).

### Working while pregnant

- Individuals who are pregnant can continue to work. Talk to your employer about the type of work you do, access to personal protective equipment (PPE) and how to protect yourself from being exposed to the virus.
- It is important for you to wash your hands often, practice physical distancing, wear a [face mask](#) indoors and when distancing is difficult, and stay home if you are sick.

### Prenatal appointments

- Ask your health care provider which [prenatal appointments](#) can be virtual, and which require an in-person visit.
- If you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), call your health care provider prior to any appointments to let them know and to find out if you should [get tested](#).

### Preparing for labour and birth

- A lot is still being learned about COVID-19 during labour and birth.
- Talk to your health care provider about your birth plan. Due to COVID-19, some procedures may be different than what you expect.

- You will be screened for COVID-19 when you arrive at your place of birth. If you are sick with COVID-19 symptoms, additional precautions will be taken to protect your baby and others around you.
- Many hospitals and birth centres only allow one support person in the birthing and post-partum areas. Your support person will be screened for COVID-19. If they have COVID-19, or may have it, they will not be able to be with you for the birth.
- Your support person will need to stay in your room. They will not be able to leave and come back, even for just a few minutes. Another support person cannot take over if they leave.
- For home births, talk to your midwife about how to make your environment safe.
- You will have to [wear a face mask](#) while getting care, and your support person will have to wear a mask as well.
- Breastfeeding is recommended even if you have COVID-19 as there is no evidence that the virus is transmitted in breast milk.
- If giving birth during the COVID-19 pandemic worries you, talk to your health care provider.

### More information

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

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