



If you are positive for, under investigation for, or have symptoms of COVID-19 or any respiratory illness, you may have questions about how to safely feed your baby. For more information about COVID-19 or to complete a self-assessment, visit the Government of Saskatchewan website at [www.saskatchewan.ca](http://www.saskatchewan.ca).

Your own breast milk provides the best nutrition and health benefits for your baby. Special properties in your breast milk, like antibodies, can protect your baby from getting an infectious disease. Your baby may be protected from COVID-19 because antibodies that fight COVID-19 are likely passed from your breast milk to your baby.

Current feeding recommendations are based on what is known about breastfeeding and feeding expressed breast milk during other viral respiratory infections. There are no reports at this time of the COVID-19 virus being found in breast milk.

When you have COVID-19, there are important steps to follow when feeding your baby to help decrease the chance of your baby getting COVID-19. These should be followed any time you are feeling unwell, have symptoms of COVID-19, and during the 14 day period of self-isolation and monitoring for COVID-19.

**Feeding Options:**

- Breastfeed
- Pump and feed expressed breast milk
- Formula feed
- Feed pasteurized donor human milk
  - available for some babies in certain hospitals
  - available for some babies at home from NorthernStar Mothers Milk Bank with a prescription from a doctor, nurse practitioner or a midwife

**Important Tips with COVID-19:**

- If you are breastfeeding and/or feeding expressed breast milk, maintain your milk supply with regular hand expression and hands on pumping.
- If you are not breastfeeding or are too ill, a healthy adult who is not COVID-19 positive and does not have symptoms of COVID-19, should feed your baby and provide all other care.
- While breastfeeding (every time, well or unwell) wear a mask and wash your hands before and after feeding and caring for your baby.
- When not feeding or caring for your baby, keep your baby 2 meters (6 feet) away.

**Hand Washing Steps with Soap and Water or Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer:**

	Washing Hands with Soap and Water	Using an Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer
<b>Step 1</b>	Wet hands with running water	If hands are visibly dirty, wash with water
<b>Step 2</b>	Apply enough soap to cover wet hands	Apply enough sanitizer to cover hands
<b>Step 3</b>	Scrub all surfaces of the hands for at least 20 seconds, including palms, back of hands, thumbs, between fingers, and under nails	
<b>Step 4</b>	Rinse well with running water	Allow to completely air dry
<b>Step 5</b>	Dry hands with a disposable towel or a clean cloth	



### Breastfeeding with COVID-19:

- Wear a mask.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after breastfeeding your baby.
- Clean your chest area with soap and water before breastfeeding or skin-to-skin contact.

### Feeding expressed breast milk, pasteurized donor human milk or formula with COVID-19:

- If you are not breastfeeding or are too ill, a healthy adult who is not COVID-19 positive and does not have symptoms of COVID-19, should feed your baby.
- If no healthy adult is able to feed or care for your baby, wear a mask and wash your hands before and after feeding your baby.

### Using a Breast Pump at the Hospital with COVID-19:

- When possible, use a pump dedicated for your use only.
- Wear a mask.
- Clean pump with a disinfectant wipe if pump is not dedicated for your use alone.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before touching the pump and bottle parts.
- Clean your chest area with soap and water before pumping.
- After each pumping session, all pump parts that touch your breast and expressed breast milk need to be cleaned:
  1. Rinse pump parts with cold water and then wash in a basin with hot soapy water.
  2. Rinse off the soap and allow pump parts to air dry on a clean towel, on a clean surface.
  3. Clean the pump with a disinfectant wipe.
- Let your nurse know when you have expressed breast milk to be picked up. Your nurse will hold open a plastic bag for you to place the bottles in. The bag will be labelled with your baby's name and taken to your baby.
- If you have been discharged with instructions to self-isolate at home but your baby must stay in hospital, talk to your health care team about a healthy adult bringing your expressed breast milk to the hospital.

### Using a Breast Pump at Home with COVID-19:

- Wear a mask.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before touching the pump and bottle parts.
- Clean your chest area with soap and water before pumping.
- After each pumping session, all pump parts that touch your breast and expressed breast milk need to be cleaned:
  1. Rinse pump parts with cold water and then scrub well with a bristle brush using hot soapy water.
  2. Rinse off the soap and allow pump parts to air dry on a clean towel or drying rack on a clean surface.
  3. Breast flanges and bottles can be washed on the upper rack of a standard household dishwasher away from heating elements. Wash diaphragms and valves gently by hand.
- Check the manufacturer's label for more information about what parts of the pump are safe to clean and disinfect.

### Cleaning Feeding Items at Home:

1. Rinse all bottles, nipples, rings, caps, discs, measuring cup, can opener if needed, containers for storing boiled water, mixing utensils, and tongs with cold water.
2. Wash feeding items in hot, soapy water.



3. Use a bottle brush that is used only for infant feeding items. Scrub inside the bottles and nipples to make sure they are free of any sign of expressed breast milk or formula.
4. Rinse well in hot water and set feeding items on a clean towel, on a clean surface.
5. Disinfect all feeding items.

### Disinfect Feeding Items after Cleaning:

1. Place all clean feeding items in a large pot and fill the pot with water.
2. Put a pair of tongs in the pot with the handle sticking out of the water.
3. Bring water in the pot to a rolling boil and let boil for 2 minutes.
4. Use the disinfected tongs to remove the feeding items from the water and place feeding items on a clean towel, on a clean surface.
5. Let the disinfected feeding items cool and air dry before using.
6. After feeding items are dry, fit nipples, caps, and rings together. Put the nipple on the inside of the bottle to keep it clean until you are ready to use it. Do not touch the inside of the feeding items.

### Questions?

Your baby's health care team can answer your questions. Ask to speak to your baby's doctor, nurse, dietitian, lactation consultant or public health nurse.

### For more information about COVID-19 and feeding your baby, visit:

[Canadian Pediatric Society](#)

[www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/breastfeeding-when-mothers-have-suspected-or-proven-covid-19](http://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/breastfeeding-when-mothers-have-suspected-or-proven-covid-19)

[Dietitians of Canada](#)

[www.dietitians.ca/News/2020/Advice-for-the-general-public-about-COVID-19](http://www.dietitians.ca/News/2020/Advice-for-the-general-public-about-COVID-19)

[Human Milk Banking Association of North America](#)

[www.hmbana.org/news/statement-on-coronavirus.html](http://www.hmbana.org/news/statement-on-coronavirus.html)

[World Health Organization](#)

[www.emro.who.int/nutrition/nutrition-infocus/breastfeeding-advice-during-covid-19-outbreak.html](http://www.emro.who.int/nutrition/nutrition-infocus/breastfeeding-advice-during-covid-19-outbreak.html)

### For information about hand expression and hands on pumping, visit:

[More Milk Sooner](#)

[www.moremilksooner.com/handexpression](http://www.moremilksooner.com/handexpression)

[Stanford Medicine](#)

[med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding/hand-expressing-milk.html](http://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding/hand-expressing-milk.html)

### For information about how to safely prepare infant formula, visit:

[Government of Saskatchewan— Infant Formula Feeding](#)

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/wellness-and-prevention/children-health-and-parenting/feeding-your-baby>

[Best Start Ontario - Infant Formula: What You Need to Know](#)

[resources.beststart.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/B19-E.pdf](https://resources.beststart.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/B19-E.pdf)