



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

PROTECTING MILK SUPPLY

Every drop of breastmilk counts in supporting the health of infants and lactating parents. The unique properties of human milk impacts every system in the human body, especially with the immune system and brain development.

The first milk, Colostrum, is liquid gold packed with nutrients and antibodies that is important to the health of a newborn.

As the milk continues to mature, it includes the perfect combination of properties for infant growth.

Breastfeeding parents are also getting their own set of protections as well. This includes reducing the risk or severity of postpartum hemorrhage, postpartum depression, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and several other conditions.

There may be some hurdles that impact the breastfeeding journey, and during this time of social distancing, it may be difficult to navigate some of these challenges. While working through challenges, simply follow 3 key steps:

- 1. Feed the Baby**
- 2. Protect the Milk Supply**
- 3. Find a Solution**

Feeding the baby is always important. Protecting the milk supply includes expressing milk for 20 to 30 minutes using clean hands or breast pump for every feeding that baby does not do directly at the breast/chest.

This expressed milk can be stored and used for feeding the baby. Breastfeeding should not be painful, and if so, please consider reaching out to the resources listed in this section to help find a solution to overcoming the hurdle.



BREASTFEEDING AND COVID-19

Myth: Women with COVID-19 cannot or should not breastfeed.

Fact: To date, the virus has not been found in mothers' breast milk. Women with COVID-19 can breastfeed if they wear a mask (if available), wash hands thoroughly before, and clean the surfaces they touch.

SOURCE

To keep infants protected from COVID-19, the CDC recommends mothers thoroughly wash their hands before touching their infant. Based on current information, [the CDC has set out temporary guidelines](#) for mothers that have tested positive or are suspected of having COVID-19 (this guidance is subject to change). It is recommended that mothers:

- Wash their hands before touching their infant
- Consult their healthcare providers on breastfeeding guidance
- Wear a face mask while feeding if they are sick or suspected of being sick
- If using a breast pump, thoroughly [clean the pump](#)
- If possible, have someone who is healthy feed the infant

Mothers that have tested positive or are suspected of having COVID-19 should follow [these guidelines](#) for caring for their infant.

Keep in mind that it is possible that you and your baby may be separated depending on your health and recovery. If your baby is sent home with a loved one, ensure that they have access to breast milk and this information so that they are best prepared for caring for your baby before you are reunited again.

Women with COVID-19 can breastfeed if they wish to do so. They should:

- Practice respiratory hygiene and wear a mask
- Wash hands before and after touching the baby
- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces

World Health Organization
#COVID19 #CORONAVIRUS

If a woman with COVID-19 is too unwell to breastfeed, she can be supported to safely provide her baby with breastmilk in other ways, including by:

- Expressing milk
- Relactation
- Donor human milk

World Health Organization
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GENERAL BREASTFEEDING RESOURCES

[Breastfeeding Information in Multiple Languages](#)

BREASTPUMPS

- Contact your [local WIC office](#) for pump availability
 - Consider that your local office may have limitations on breast pump pick-up
 - If you are not enrolled in WIC, you can [enroll via Gateway here](#)
 - Learn more about WIC breast pumps [here](#)
- If you are enrolled in pregnancy Medicaid, you may be eligible
- If you have private insurance, contact your insurance company about availability
- While in-patient, ask your delivery hospital about breast pump availability
- For virtual lactation support, you may be able to find a provider near you at zipmilk.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

- [Rose Virtual Baby Cafe - Breastfeeding Support](#)
- [La Leche League - Facebook Support Groups](#)
- [ZipMilk Support Groups](#)

DONOR MILK

After delivery if you are unable to supply breast milk, your baby may be supplied with donor breast milk. Donor milk comes from a [Human Milk Banking Association of North America \(HMBANA\)](#), certified milk “bank.” This milk is safe for consumption and has gone through a series of steps including screening and pasteurization to kill viruses and bacteria before being packaged and sent to the hospital. [Learn more about COVID-19 and donor milk here.](#) If you have excess breast milk, consider [donating to a local milk bank.](#)

Some families may be considering using and sharing breast milk with loved ones, also known as informal milk sharing. This may be risky as informal milk sharing does not go through the same screening process as donor milk banks do. While COVID-19 has not been found in breast milk to date, there may be a number of exposures through this process. Below are some sources that may help guide your decision if you are considering informal milk sharing.

- [Academy of Medicine 2017 Position Statement on Informal Milk Sharing.](#)
- [4 Pillars of Safe Milk Sharing.](#)



FORMULA SHORTAGES

Myth: Due to COVID-19 and possible stocking shortages, infant formula companies will send free formula if you call the number on the back of the can.

Fact: The National WIC Association has confirmed that formula companies are not sending free cans of formula for people that call their number.

SOURCE



While stockpiling across the country has caused formula shortages in some areas, you can check with your local stores and manufacturers on availability. Formula manufacturers recommend using their website store locators to help identify stores that have available products. If families are able to purchase online, retailers may be able to ship. Please keep in mind they may still encounter delays in shipments.

Your local food bank may have formula available if you are unable to find or afford it. It is recommended that you **not** use milk alternatives for babies less than 6 months (i.e. soy milk). Additionally, watering down and creating homemade formula can be dangerous by causing nutritional imbalances so it is important to follow label instructions. The American Academy of Pediatrics has provided some tips for dealing with the formula shortage:

- Contact your local WIC office to see if they can help
- Ask your pediatrician if they can get a can from formula representatives
- To avoid watering down formula for babies younger than 6 months, you can temporarily provide a few days of cow's milk
- Check availability at small grocery and drug stores
- See if you are able to buy formula online from distributors and pharmacies
- Consider borrowing a can from a family or friend

Viruses vs Breast Milk



Bay Area Breastfeeding Support



After getting contact with a virus, antibodies will be produced in breast milk within 40 minutes

As a child ages, breastfeeds less and less milk is produced, the concentration of immune factors increases



1 teaspoon of breast milk contains 50k - 500k virus fighting white blood cells!

http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0104-42302016000600584

ZipMilk.org



Neighborhood breastfeeding help is a click away.

Find local, personalized resources within your zip code.

ADDITIONAL BREASTFEEDING INFORMATION & RESOURCES

- [National Perinatal Association COVID-19 Breastfeeding Resources](#)
- [World Health Organization Pregnancy & COVID-19 Q&A](#)
- [March of Dimes COVID-19 Info Page](#)
- [ACOG Coronavirus \(COVID-19\), Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding](#)
- [COVID-19 Fact Sheets \(30+ Languages and Includes Pregnancy\)](#)
- [Baby Center - Coronavirus Pregnancy FAQ](#)
- [Every Mother Counts – COVID-19 Resource Hub](#)
- [Office on Women’s Health Your Guide to Breastfeeding](#)
- [Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Covid-19 Statement](#)
- [Navigating Formula Shortages](#)
- [Breastfeeding and COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies](#)
- [COVID-19 Breastfeeding Resources \(for Healthcare Workers\)](#)
- [MotherToBaby - Medications and More during Pregnancy & Breastfeeding](#)
- [Piedmont Healthcare’s Donor Milk Program](#)
- [Northeast Georgia Medical Center's Donor Milk Program](#)





Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia (HMHBGA) would like to recognize the following partner organizations for their contributions to this toolkit. Their expertise, time, and dedication to ensuring families are connected to the resources they need during the COVID-19 crisis furthers our mission of improving maternal and infant health through advocacy, education, and access to vital resources.

- A Better Balance
- Atlanta Birth Project
- Bellies to Babies Foundation
- Center for Black Women’s Wellness
- Center for Reproductive Rights
- Emory University
- Feminist Women’s Health Center
- Georgia Breastfeeding Coalition
- Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students
- Georgia OBGyn Society
- Georgians for a Healthy Future
- Majaica, LLC
- March of Dimes Georgia
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- Nurse-Midwives of Georgia
- Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE)
- SisterSong
- Twin Mommy, LLC
- Voices for Georgia’s Children



The Atlanta Birth Project

