



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

BREASTFEEDING YOUR INFANT DURING COVID-19

Breast milk is our first traditional food

Breast milk is our first traditional food and is the best option for infants, so keep going!

- Breastfeeding is recommended, even if you are COVID-19 positive or sick with COVID-19.
- Breastfeeding can protect your baby against many illnesses because it helps strengthen their immune system. It also contains your Ancestors' DNA and strength – so pass that on to your baby and your future generations.
- COVID-19 has not been found to pass through breast milk at this time.
- Breastfeed often to build up and maintain a good milk supply for your baby.

It takes a community to support a family with a new baby.

- You and your baby are learning to breastfeed together and every breastfeeding experience is unique.
- Elders, Aunties or other people in your community who have breastfed can help support you.
- Reach out to people who have breastfeeding knowledge like your community health nurse, CHR, doula, doctor, midwife and nurse practitioner: they are there for you and would love to help.
- First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day: call 1-855-344-3800 to speak to a doctor.
- Lactation consultants (LC) specialize in breastfeeding. Your community health care provider may be able to make arrangements with an LC or public health unit to provide you with additional breastfeeding support.
- Need help learning how to increase your milk supply or keeping a good supply? Ask for help. Sometimes it can be challenging, but there are people and resources to support you.



Caring for your baby while breastfeeding.

- The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh the risks.
- Close contact will help your baby flourish. Holding your baby skin-to-skin when possible is good for you and your baby. Relax and enjoy your baby.

- Wash your hands often and well with soap and water, and always before and after feeding and touching your baby. This keeps germs away and your baby safe.
- Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue, and then throw the tissue away and wash your hands.
- If you recently coughed or sneezed, or you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19, as an added precaution clean your breast area with soap and water before a feeding.
- Practise physical distancing with other people and avoid contact with others who are unwell.
- Frequently clean and disinfect all surfaces, especially high-touch areas like taps, kitchen surfaces, door knobs and your cellphone.

Keeping your breastfeeding supplies clean and safe.

- Wash your hands before touching your breast pump and before you hand express.
- If using a breast pump, clean and disinfect all pump parts that come into contact with human milk.
- If using bottles for breast milk, take extra care to keep the bottles safe for your baby: wash each piece with soap and water and then place all parts in boiling water for two minutes to sterilize them.

Caring for yourself while you are breastfeeding.

- It is important for you to be healthy and strong to care for your baby and to make milk.
- Get enough rest. Sleep when the baby sleeps.
- Practise healthy ways of coping with stress: perhaps going outside for fresh air, talking to someone, exercising, doing breathing/relaxation exercises, or listening to music.
- Drink enough fluids and eat well.
- Connect with others through phone and video calls.
- If you are sick (e.g., cough, sore throat, fever, sneezing), wash your hands often, and use a mask when feeding and any time you are holding, caring for your baby or near your baby. Replace your mask with a new one if it gets wet or soiled.

*You are doing a great job!
Remember that it is okay to need help
and ask for help.*

Taken from Baby's Best Chance 7th edition 2019.

Put this in your basket of teachings to help you on your breastfeeding journey and support the wellness of you and your baby.

