

COVID-19 (coronavirus):

Information for parents of newborn babies



Although the risks are very low, you may be concerned that your baby could get COVID-19. This factsheet tells you what to look out for and what to do if you're worried about your baby. **Do not delay** seeking help if you have concerns.

How will I know if my baby has COVID-19?

Many babies with the virus will not show signs of illness and will recover fully. Some can develop an unstable temperature and/or a cough. Babies with infections do not always develop a fever.

- If your baby has a cough, fever or feels unusually hot or cold, but otherwise well, then call your GP.
- If your baby is jaundiced or feeding poorly, call your midwife or health visitor.
- If you are worried about your baby's breathing, colour or movement, then call 999 straight away.

Is my baby at risk?

Babies can potentially catch COVID-19 after birth from anyone infected with the virus, even if that person does not feel unwell. You should take your baby home as soon as the hospital discharges you.

Don't let visitors, even close family, into your home. You and your baby should stay at home for 14 days if anyone in your household develops a continuous cough or high temperature.

In particular, you should keep your baby away from people with a cough, fever or other viral symptoms such as a runny nose, vomiting or diarrhoea.

If you have concerns about your baby's health at any time, please contact your midwife or health visitor.

How to help

Reduce your baby's risk of catching COVID-19:

- Wash your hands properly before touching your baby, breast pumps or bottles.
- Wash your hands properly after nappy changes and contact with other members of the family.
- Continue to breastfeed your baby: there is currently no evidence that the virus can be transmitted through breastmilk.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing on the baby while feeding.
- If you feel unwell, ask someone in your household who is well to feed your baby.
- Follow pump cleaning recommendations after each use.
- If using a bottle, follow sterilisation guidelines fully.

If your baby has been on the neonatal unit because they were born prematurely or unwell, please visit the Tiny Life website: www.tinylife.org

Midwifery and health visiting support is still operating and is prioritising support for babies with jaundice and prolonged jaundice – For further information on newborn jaundice, feeding difficulties and other signs of illness in the newborn visit www.nidirect.gov.uk and search for 'newborn jaundice',

'common problems feeding your baby' and 'childhood illness'.

For any other concerns about your baby's health and development, you can call your midwife or health visitor.

Routine screening and immunisation for your baby will continue as normal. Telephone helpline numbers and further information are available from:

www.ni-maternity.com