

Someone who does not have coronavirus can take the child to hospital but must explain to the nursing staff the situation at home. They can also take the child's Road to Health booklet with them. This person should wear a mask and if the child is older than 2 years then the child must also wear a mask.

Keep household surfaces clean by wiping them with 6 teaspoons of bleach in one litre of water.

### Should my child wear a mask?

Children over 2 years of age should wear a mask when outside the home. A child should not wear a mask if they cannot breathe properly through the mask, if they fiddle with it and touch their face, if they cannot take it off because they are too young or because of a disability. Let them practise wearing the mask for a short time when they are at home so that they are used to it when they go to school.

### Why should I wear a cloth mask?

Cloth masks stop the virus getting into the air and infecting people. Each person should have two masks: one in the wash and one on the face. It should cover your mouth and nose. Put it on and take it off using the elastic bands. Don't fiddle with it when it is in place. Wash the mask after you take it off in soap and hot water and iron it to kill the virus. Never share your mask with anyone. Wear a mask from when you leave your home. Wash your hands.

### Can children spread coronavirus to others?

Yes, they can so keep children away from senior citizens and people with chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure because older adults may get sicker than younger people. Teach your children the golden rules of good hygiene.



### How can I cope as mother as a mother during Covid-19?

Here are some tips for coping with stress during this time.

1. Notice, name and accept your feelings. They are normal reactions to an abnormal situation.
2. Limit how often you check the news if it is feeling too much.
3. Get your facts from reliable sources only. There is lot of fake news.
4. Do simple things to take your mind off this situation.
5. Ask for support from family, friends or a counsellor. Speak to someone you trust.
6. If you can, helping others during this time can make you feel better.

### Helplines

- South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org)  
0800 21 22 23 or 0800 456 789 or 0800 20 5026
- Lifeline general 0861 322 322 and their AIDS Helpline 0800 012 322
- Childline 0800 055 555

### What are the 5 golden rules of good hygiene to stop the spread of the coronavirus?

1. Wash your hands with soap and water or sanitiser for 20 seconds.
2. Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
3. Cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow or into a tissue which you then throw away safely.
4. Keep 1,5 metres away from others.
5. Stay home if you feel sick. Contact a health worker or a hotline at 0800 029 999 or 021 928 4102.

Information adapted from the "Messages for Mothers" coalition.

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# Covid-19 and pregnant women



## How does coronavirus/ Covid-19 spread?

Coronavirus spreads in water droplets when we cough, sneeze, speak, shout, sing. These water droplets fly through the air and land on the face of the other person or because they are heavy they fall onto surfaces. That is why we wear masks. It is the only thing between you and the water droplets. We also stand 1,5 metres from others so that the water droplets cannot reach us.

We also need to wash the surfaces with soap and water or bleach to kill the coronavirus.

## Do I need to go to the clinic during my pregnancy?

Yes, it is important to go for your regular antenatal visits. Wear your cloth mask. If you have symptoms such as dry cough, sore throat, sore muscles, high temperature then you will be asked to go to a separate room to be tested for Covid-19 also called coronavirus. If you have mild symptoms you will be asked to isolate at home till you get the results.

## Can coronavirus affect my pregnancy?

At the moment there is no proof that the coronavirus can go via the womb to the unborn baby. There is also no proof of an increased chance of miscarriage or abnormalities in your new born. It is a good idea to have a flu injection so that you have less chance of getting flu which can weaken your immune system.

## Will I be more at risk of getting coronavirus if I have a chronic disease and I am pregnant?

If you have TB, heart or lung diseases, high blood pressure, HIV or diabetes then you may be more at risk of getting coronavirus. Discuss your medication with your health worker.



## What should I do if I don't feel well when I am pregnant?

Go to the MOU or hospital if you are bleeding, have a severe headache, you can't feel the baby move, pain in your belly or your water breaks. Also tell the health worker if you have coronavirus symptoms. If you have difficulty breathing then you must go for medical help.

## What will happen when I go into labour?

All women in labour will be screened at the facility. If you don't have coronavirus then you will be looked after in the normal delivery room. If you have coronavirus then you will be looked after in a separate area and the health workers will wear personal protective clothing. You will be asked to wear a mask. You can have a normal delivery and the baby will be placed onto your chest (skin to skin) and breastfeeding should start at birth.

## What about a birth companion?

You must find out before the time what the policy is at the facility you are going to give birth. Some facilities may not allow birth companions during the coronavirus pandemic to stop the virus from spreading. You can connect to your support person over the phone while you are in labour.

## Can I breastfeed if I have or may have coronavirus?

All mothers should continue breastfeeding as it is the best food for your baby. So far coronavirus has not been found in breastmilk. Wash your hands with soap and water before breastfeeding and when holding your baby or placing them on your chest (skin to skin). Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth when breastfeeding. Choose 2 or 3 people who can help you care for the baby but they must wash their hands and wear a mask before touching the baby. No-one should touch or kiss the baby's face.

## Should I take my baby for immunisations?

It is very important to take your child for the immunisations listed in the Road to Health Booklet. Find out from the clinic if there are special arrangements for immunisations during the lockdown. Wear your mask when you take the baby to the clinic.

## Can I still go for my contraceptives during lockdown?

Yes, it is very important to get your family planning method after you have given birth to ensure that each child is wanted and planned. Condoms also protect you from sexually transmitted diseases and falling pregnant when you did not want to. Rather wait till the coronavirus problem is over before you plan a pregnancy.

## How do I protect myself if I have to use public transport to the clinic?

Phone your clinic before you leave home to find out if there are special plans for antenatal and postnatal visits during the lockdown. But stay at home if you don't feel well. Walk to the clinic if you can. If you have to use a taxi then put on your mask, try to sit away from others and sanitize your hands when you get out.

## What do I do if I am worried about my child's health when there is someone in my house who has coronavirus?

Most children will get coronavirus very mildly and will recover. However, if the child has other problems such as malnutrition, TB, HIV or chest problems or other long term illnesses and then gets coronavirus then call the clinic/ doctor for advice. You can also call the hotlines. If the child becomes sick and you think it is an emergency then call the ambulance and explain the situation.