



JUNE 2020

NAVIGATING COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM FAMILIES

A TOOLKIT FOR FAMILIES NAVIGATING PREGNANCY, LABOR AND
THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD IN GEORGIA



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





PURPOSE

This resource is meant to provide guidance for families on how to plan for pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Due to the current public health emergency, navigating our health system may be difficult at this time. Resources within this toolkit include how to prepare for delivery, postpartum & infant health information, and how to apply for public benefits.

Most importantly, we want to make sure you feel supported, informed and empowered to make decisions around your pregnancy, delivery and postpartum period.

We will continue to update this guide as new resources become available and public health guidance shifts.

If you would like to share resources with us to include in the next version of this toolkit, please email us at thecoalition@hmhbga.org.

The publication date for this version of the toolkit is June 5, 2020.

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5. Postpartum Support
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9. Employee Rights & Benefits

Disclaimer: The information and content (collectively, "Content"), included in this Toolkit ("*Navigating COVID-19: Resources for Pregnant & Postpartum Families*"), is for your general educational information only. The Content should not be considered and is not intended as legal or medical advice. You must not rely on the information in this Toolkit as an alternative to legal or medical judgment. The resources in this toolkit will be developed and updated on an ongoing basis, and may change.





COVID-19 & PREGNANCY

WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 (coronavirus) is a disease that can spread through the air (coughing and sneezing), close personal contact, or by touching areas of your face without washing your hands after coming into contact with the virus.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after someone is exposed and can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

If you suspect you are sick, you should contact your healthcare provider or call the Georgia COVID-19 hotline at: (844) 442-2681.

While experts are still learning about the spread and severity of COVID-19, people should seek medical attention if they experience trouble breathing, confusion, persistent chest pain, or bluish lips or face.

COVID-19 & PREGNANCY

Scientists are conducting research to better understand the effects of COVID-19 on pregnant women and their infants. To date, experts do not know if pregnant women are more susceptible to COVID-19 or face increased risks if they test positive. Although pregnant women are at greater risk of illness from similar conditions such as the flu. Additionally, to date no infant born to mothers with COVID-19 have tested positive and the virus has not been found in samples of amniotic fluid or breast milk (small number of cases).

CDC Guidelines on Pregnancy & Guidelines

It is important that pregnant and postpartum women protect themselves and their infants. Women are encouraged to take recommended precautions against the spread including:

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Cover coughs or sneezes with tissue or elbow
- Avoid close contact with people who may be sick
- Clean frequently touched surfaces
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Stay home if sick except to seek medical care



CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

(COVID-19)

You can prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses with these simple actions:

- Wash your hands often with soap & water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap & water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched areas and objects often.

Visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index for more information.

INFANTS & COVID-19

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 who 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 who have tested positive or are suspected of having COVID-19 should follow these guidelines for caring for their infant.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & INFORMATION

- [Georgia Department of Public Health COVID-19 Resource Page](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Resource Page](#)
- [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](#)
- [AWHONN COVID-19 Resource Page](#)
- [DONA International COVID-19 & Doulas](#)
- [KFF Special Considerations for Pregnant Women](#)
- [Pregnancy Coronavirus Outcomes Registry](#)

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



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

Relactation is when someone restarts breastfeeding after a gap. She may have not breastfed for several days, weeks, months or years. Why do it? You might have stopped breastfeeding earlier than you wanted, or you may have changed your mind. You might have been separated from your baby or your baby might have been ill.

MYTHS/FACTS ABOUT COVID-19 & PREGNANCY

COVID-19 is a new disease that experts are continuing to learn about. As a result, you may see all types of information that may or may not be true. It is important to consider how trustworthy a source is before believing what you read. Sources to trust include the [CDC](#), [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), [Georgia Department of Public Health](#) and provider organizations ([ACOG](#), [AWHONN](#), [DONA](#), [AAP](#), [GOGS](#), [ACNM](#)). Below are some common myths related to COVID-19.

Myth: Being able to hold your breath for 10 seconds without coughing or feeling discomfort means you do not have COVID-19.

Fact: The best way to test for COVID-19 is by taking a laboratory test from a healthcare provider. A breath test is not only dangerous, but also unreliable.
[Source](#)

Myth: Pregnant women with COVID-19 need to give birth by C-section.

Fact: C-sections should only be performed when they are medically needed and should be performed based on the mother's health and preference.
[Source](#)

Myth: Women with COVID-19 cannot 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](#)

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](#)

Myth: WIC is cancelling EBT cards and sending emergency cards for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fact: In some places, people will receive EBT vouchers in the mail with additional benefits so that they do not have to come into the WIC clinic. The vouchers that states are sending out are regular EBT vouchers, not emergency EBT cards.
[Source](#)



VIRTUAL RESOURCES

In the wake of social distancing, you and your family may be in need of support through alternative methods (i.e. social media, video calls, webinars). The following resources include “tele” prenatal education, support groups, and guidance for telehealth.

PRENATAL EDUCATION

Prenatal education is an important way to empower mothers and prepare them for pregnancy and childbirth. Ask your hospital or provider if they are offering online prenatal education classes. If not, many of the educators below are providing online courses at free or discounted rates.

CURRENT LIST OF RESOURCES

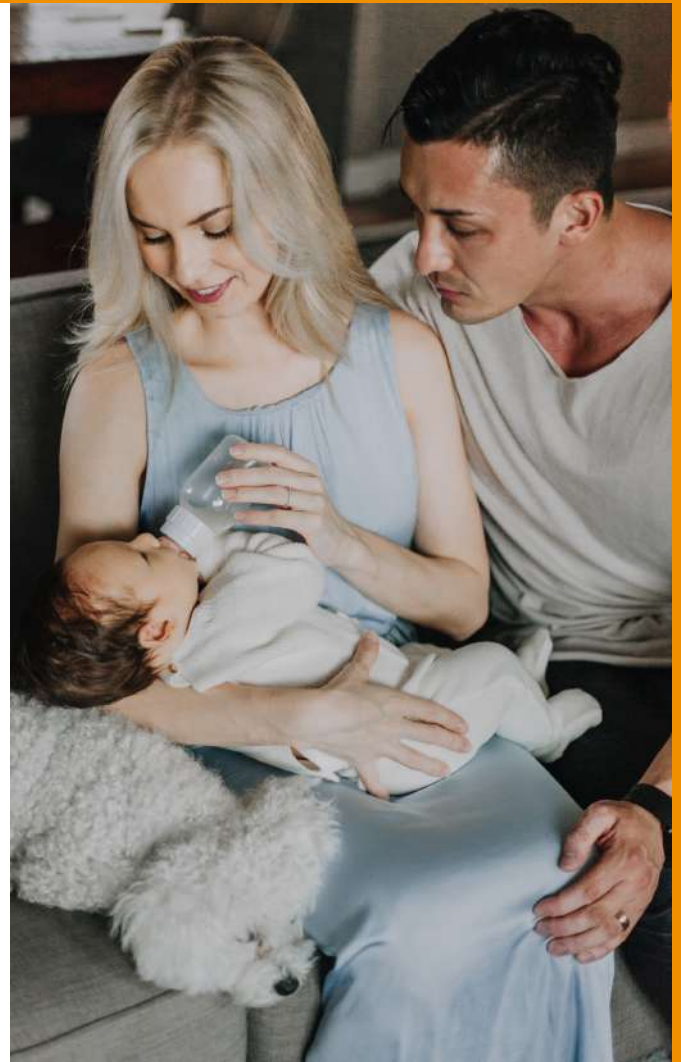
- [Pickles & Ice Cream Georgia - HMHBGA's Prenatal Course \(English & Español\)](#)
- [Atlanta Birth Project - Trauma Sensitive Birth Education](#)
- [Birthing From Within Atlanta - Childbirth, Partner, and Grandparent Classes](#)
- [Moonlight Midwifery - Prenatal Care in Your Pajamas](#)
- [Northside Hospital - Video Series on Maternal Care Issues](#)
- [SupportingHer Childbirth Course](#)
- [Pampers Childbirth Education Classes](#)
- [MotherToBaby - Medications during Pregnancy & Breastfeeding](#)
- [Text4Baby - Text Messages for Mom & Baby - Pregnancy through 1st Year](#)

SUPPORT GROUPS

You may be experiencing feelings of isolation or lack of support. Below are a number of general and breastfeeding support groups offered online.

CURRENT LIST OF RESOURCES

- [Hello It's Me Project - COVID-19 & Pregnancy Support Group](#)
- [Georgia Moms for Better Birth - Facebook Group](#)
- [Emerge - Weekly Prenatal & Postpartum Community Gatherings](#)
- [Postpartum Support International - Maternal Mental Health](#)
- [Rose Virtual Baby Cafe - Breastfeeding Support](#)
- [La Leche League - Facebook Support Groups](#)
- [Emory Decatur - BabyTalk Support \(now by video call\)](#)



TELEHEALTH

Telehealth is the use of technology to support healthcare services. This method can allow providers to care for patients remotely through video call, text messages, or other methods. This may be an option for providers to choose in place of in-person visits. It would be helpful to ask your doctor, midwife, or doula if they are offering visits through telehealth means. [Learn more about telehealth resources here.](#)

VIRTUAL DOULAS

Doulas are providing support services by phone, video conference and text to families in need. You can search for doulas in Georgia by going to: <https://www.resourcehouse.com/hmhb>

You can also call the Georgia Family Healthline at 1-800-300-9003, M-F, 9AM - 5PM, and request information about doulas serving Georgia.

Click on the images below to learn more or to register online.



Pickles & Ice Cream

Online Prenatal Education

Join us for a 90-minute course, where you can learn about pregnancy, baby care, WIC, insurance, Medicaid, staying healthy, and more!

Register here: <https://bit.ly/2xitnbl>

**Every Thursday in June
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM**

Register today and earn up to \$20 for participating!



Pickles & Ice Cream

Educación Prenatal en Línea

Una zona libre de juicios para hacer preguntas sobre el embarazo, cuidado de bebés, WIC, Medicaid, seguro, mantenerse saludable y más!

**9 de junio de 2020
23 de junio de 2020
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM**

¡Los residentes de Georgia pueden ganar hasta \$20 en tarjetas de regalo!

Regístrate aquí: <https://bit.ly/2xitnbl>



PREPARING FOR BIRTH & DELIVERY

In an effort to stop the spread of the coronavirus, many hospitals are limiting the number of visitors mothers can have in their delivery room and NICU unit. You and your support person(s) will likely be screened for symptoms upon arrival at the hospital. Be sure that your support person is healthy, as they may be turned away if symptoms are present.

Regardless of visitor limits, you and your support person(s) should be treated with dignity and respect throughout the labor and delivery process. Discrimination is not allowed and support person(s) should be

given equal treatment even if they are not family members.

Birth plans can help you outline your wishes for labor and delivery. Plans can include how you want to manage pain, where you want to give birth, or breastfeeding plans. You may want to consider how the current public health emergency may affect your birth plan and adjust in advance. Maybe your planned support person(s) is not able to attend or your breastfeeding plans change. Speak with your healthcare provider about how to best adjust your birth plan if needed.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Every labor & delivery and NICU unit is different so consider asking your provider, hospital, or birth center the following questions to prepare for what to expect:

- How many visitors are allowed in the room when I deliver?
- Are there any exceptions to the visitor limits for other essential people?
- Will my doula be allowed at my birth and not included in the visitor limit?
- Can my other children visit me in the labor and delivery unit?
- Is there anything I should bring or be aware of before coming to the hospital?
- What if I am positive or suspected to be positive of COVID-19?
- Will my hospital stay be shortened due to COVID-19?
- Will my baby stay with me at all times?
- If my baby is admitted to the NICU will I be able to visit them?
- Will my birth or breastfeeding plans change as a result of COVID-19?



IF YOU PLAN TO DELIVER AT HOME

If you are planning to deliver at home, be sure that you are assisted by a skilled provider. Consider the following:

- Home births are only recommended for low-risk and healthy pregnancies
- Work with a trained, skilled midwife
- Explore if home birth is covered by your insurance company
- Have an emergency plan in place

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Giving Birth during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [March of Dimes Statement on Delivery Support Persons](#)
- [March of Dimes COVID-19 Birth Plan](#)
- [Find a Midwife](#)
- [Birth Plan Templates and Examples](#)
- [Home Birth Benefits and Tips](#)



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT

The time after delivery is a vital period for you and your baby.

Postpartum follow up and communication with your healthcare provider is still important. You should attend your first postpartum check-up within the first three weeks after giving birth. Postpartum care is meant to meet any physical or mental health needs you may have and ensure you are healthy. You can also ask your provider if postpartum care can be done through [telehealth](#).

If you have to go to the emergency room for any reason, please let the staff know you recently gave birth and inform them of any medical conditions you may have or any complications that occurred during your pregnancy or while giving the birth.

Speak with your healthcare provider about concerns you may experience after giving birth. Know when to call 911, when to call your provider, and be aware of the following [POST-BIRTH warning signs](#) (next page).

SAVE YOUR LIFE:

Get Care for These POST-BIRTH Warning Signs

Most women who give birth recover without problems. **But any woman can have complications after the birth of a baby.** Learning to recognize these POST-BIRTH warning signs and knowing what to do can save your life.



<p>Call 911 if you have:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pain in chest <input type="checkbox"/> Obstructed breathing or shortness of breath <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby
<p>Call your healthcare provider if you have:</p> <p>(If you can't reach your healthcare provider, call 911 or go to an emergency room)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bleeding, soaking through one pad/hour, or blood clots, the size of an egg or bigger <input type="checkbox"/> Incision that is not healing <input type="checkbox"/> Red or swollen leg, that is painful or warm to touch <input type="checkbox"/> Temperature of 100.4°F or higher <input type="checkbox"/> Headache that does not get better, even after taking medicine, or bad headache with vision changes



Tell 911 or your healthcare provider:

"I had a baby on _____ (Date) and
 I am having _____ (Specific warning signs)."

These post-birth warning signs can become life-threatening if you don't receive medical care right away because:

- **Pain in chest, obstructed breathing or shortness of breath** (trouble catching your breath) may mean you have a blood clot in your lung or a heart problem
- **Seizures** may mean you have a condition called eclampsia
- **Thoughts or feelings of wanting to hurt yourself or your baby** may mean you have postpartum depression
- **Bleeding (heavy)**, soaking more than one pad in an hour or passing an egg-sized clot or bigger may mean you have an obstetric hemorrhage
- **Incision that is not healing, increased redness or any pus** from episiotomy or C-section site may mean you have an infection
- **Redness, swelling, warmth, or pain** in the calf area of your leg may mean you have a blood clot
- **Temperature of 100.4°F or higher, bad smelling vaginal blood or discharge** may mean you have an infection
- **Headache (very painful), vision changes, or pain in the upper right area of your belly** may mean you have high blood pressure or post birth preeclampsia

GET HELP My Healthcare Provider/Clinic: _____ Phone Number: _____
 Hospital Closest To Me: _____



This program is supported by funding from Merck, through Merck for Mothers, the company's 10-year, \$500 million initiative to help create a world where no woman dies giving life. Merck for Mothers is known as MSD for Mothers outside the United States and Canada.

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POSTPARTUM MENTAL HEALTH

While many new mothers go through mood changes during and after pregnancy, it is not uncommon to experience depression and anxiety symptoms. These symptoms are called perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADS), and affect about 1 in 5 mothers.

Symptoms may include:

- Inability to sleep
- Panic attacks
- Not being able to leave your baby
- Not being able to take care of daily needs

Proper care and support can help with symptoms and recovery. You can find maternal mental health professionals who may provide teletherapy, telemedicine, and online support services here.



HANDLING ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

You may be experiencing increased anxiety during this time. Social distancing might leave you feeling isolated and being uncertain of the future may cause worry. Think about the following tips to improve your mental health through the COVID-19 crisis:

- Contact loved ones by phone, chat or online
- Walk outside if possible
- Find ways to meditate or relax whenever possible
- Limit exposure to the news
- Connect with maternal mental health support groups
- Call the PSI HelpLine at 1-800-944-4773(4PPD)
- Send a text message to the Helpline: 503-894-9453 (English) (Mandar texto en español al 971-420-0294)
- Find Online Support Groups

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- AWHONN POST-BIRTH Warning Signs
- ACOG Optimal Postpartum Care
- 4th Trimester Project – Postpartum Guide
- PMAD Symptoms & Support
- PSIGA Virtual Support Resources
- COVID-19 Outbreak: Flattening the (Anxiety) Curve



INFANT HEALTH

As anxieties rise over the COVID-19 pandemic, it is natural for moms to feel worried about the health of their child. To protect infants and children, the [CDC recommends](#) the following:

- Wash hands often
- Sanitize commonly used surfaces
- Avoid people who are sick
- Wash and sanitize toys
- Stay home if possible

You should also clean commonly used baby items such as changing tables, wipe boxes, car seats, crib railings, diaper bags, and pacifiers. You can clean with soap and water and/or a household disinfectant. The [CDC also has household cleaning guidelines](#) where you can find

recommended disinfectants and how to best clean different types of surfaces.

To keep infants protected from COVID-19, the CDC recommends mothers thoroughly wash their hands before touching their infant. Based on what is known about COVID-19, the [CDC has set out temporary guidelines for breastfeeding](#), mothers (this guidance is subject to change). It is recommended that mothers:

- Wash hands before touching 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

NEWBORN SAFETY

General newborn safety guidance should also be followed during this time.

- Safe sleep: follow the ABC method when putting your infant to bed. Babies should sleep:
 - Alone
 - On their **Back**
 - In a Crib or bassinet
- Car seats: review this car seat safety guide for installment instruction and proper seat information
- Vaccinations: It is recommended that infants still receive their scheduled vaccinations during this time.



NEWBORN SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Newborn support programs are still available during COVID-19. The Georgia Home Visiting Program is using phone and video calls to continue services. Babies Can't Wait, an early intervention program for families of babies with developmental delays and disabilities, is providing services through similar methods.

Keep in mind that it is possible for your baby to be sent home with a loved one depending on your health and recovery. Ensure that they have access to these resources and information so that they are best prepared for caring for your baby before you return home.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Tips for Coping with a New Baby during COVID-19
- Voices – Resources for Parents with Children at Home
- Georgia Home Visiting Program (available via phone and video)
- Babies Can't Wait Early Intervention Program
- Helping Mamas - Baby Supplies (metro ATL)



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.

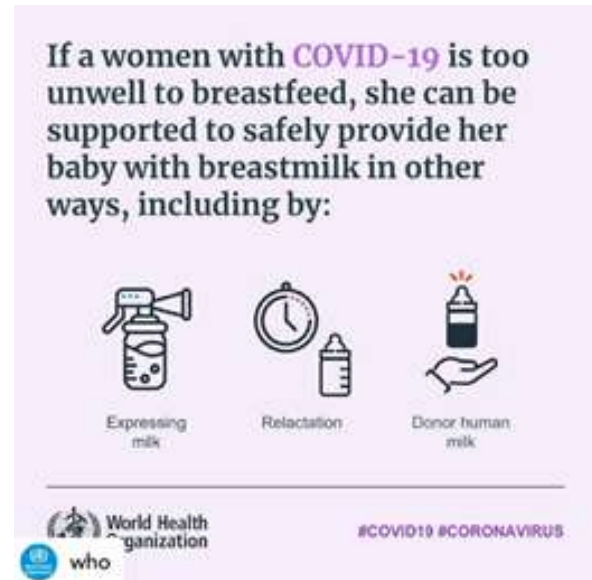
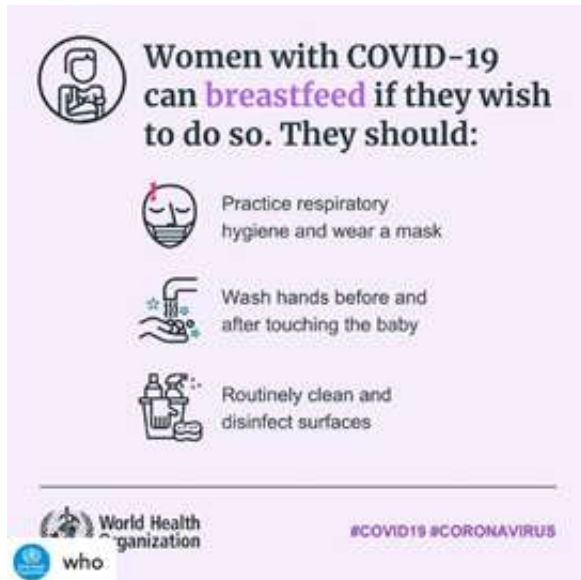
SOURCE

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.



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](#)





INSURANCE & PUBLIC BENEFITS

Many people are experiencing job loss, decreased work hours, and insurance loss. The following section includes a number of resources to help you and your family navigate this difficult time.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

IF YOU HAVE PRIVATE INSURANCE

- Insurers have been mandated to cover testing and the diagnostic visit for COVID-19 at no cost to you (per the [new Families First Coronavirus Relief Act](#)).
- If you are tested for COVID-19 and later receive a bill, call your insurance company. If they refuse to cover the bill, call the Consumer Services Division of the Georgia Department of Insurance: 1-800-656-2298.
- Georgia's Insurance Commissioner has asked all insurance companies not to terminate plans that are unrelated to employment, even if you can't pay.
- If your insurance plan is cancelled before Georgia's public health emergency ends, call the Consumer Services Division of the Georgia Department of Insurance: 1-800-656-2298.

IF YOU ARE RECENTLY UNINSURED

If you are recently unemployed and have lost your employer-based health insurance, you have several options:

- You may qualify for what is called a **Special Enrollment Period** making you eligible to get health insurance on www.healthcare.gov.
- To see if you qualify for a special enrollment period and for help enrolling in insurance coverage, call Insure GA at 1-866-988-8246.
- COBRA is a health insurance program for employees who may have lost their job or experienced decreased work hours.
 - You may qualify for COBRA continuation coverage for those previously covered by group health plans maintained by private sector employers with at least 20 employees or by state and local governments.
 - Your former employer should issue a letter on how to continue coverage through COBRA.
- Medicaid: See more below on applying for Medicaid.

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY ON MEDICAID

- You cannot be voluntarily disenrolled from Medicaid, meaning if you get it now, you should keep getting it through (at least) the end of the crisis.
- If you have pregnancy Medicaid coverage, this means coverage can continue beyond 60 days postpartum as long as the public health emergency continues.
- Renewals due in March and April are being automatically extended 4 months.
- If your Medicaid is cancelled, you can contact Legal Aid:
 - Atlanta Legal Aid Society (Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Clayton, & Gwinnett): 404-524-5811 or www.atlantalegalaid.org/apply.
 - Georgia Legal Services (the rest of Georgia): 1-833-GLSPLAW or online at www.glsplaw.org.

APPLYING FOR MEDICAID

- Even if you have been denied Medicaid in the past, you may be eligible now.
- You can apply by visiting www.gateway.ga.gov or calling 1-877-423-4746
- If you are denied Medicaid, but you think you should qualify, you can contact Legal Aid:
 - Atlanta Legal Aid Society (Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Clayton, & Gwinnett): 404-524-5811 or www.atlantalegalaid.org/apply.
 - Georgia Legal Services (the rest of Georgia): 1-833-GLSPLAW or online at www.glsplaw.org.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) OR FOOD STAMPS

IF YOU CURRENTLY RECEIVE FOOD STAMPS (SNAP)

- Your benefits for the months of March and April may increase to accommodate for changes in the economy.
- Renewals due in March or April are automatically extended for 6 months.
- If your income is affected due to a change in your employment, make sure to report the change on your Gateway account at www.gateway.ga.gov.
- Learn more about changes in Georgia SNAP benefits [here](#) (video).

TO APPLY FOR FOOD STAMPS (SNAP)

- Visit www.gateway.ga.gov or call 1-877-423-4746.
- You may qualify even if you have not in the past due to changes in the program to accommodate the current crisis.
- If you are denied SNAP benefits, but you think you should qualify, you can contact Legal Aid:
 - Atlanta Legal Aid Society (Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Clayton, & Gwinnett): 404-524-5811 or www.atlantalegalaid.org/apply.
 - Georgia Legal Services (the rest of Georgia): 1-833-GLSPLAW or online at www.glsplaw.org.

WOMEN, INFANT, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

If you currently receive WIC benefits:

- Keep updated on changes at dph.georgia.gov/WIC.
- Local WIC offices are now able to:
 - Provide 30-day extensions for certifications
 - Mail vouchers (instead of in-person pickup)
 - Give nutrition education via telephone or website
- Contact your local WIC office for adjusted COVID-19 services available in your area at sendss.state.ga.us/sendss/lwicclinic.SCREEN.

To apply for the WIC program:

- Visit gaprereg.statewic.net or call 1-800-228-9173.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR PUBLIC BENEFITS

1. BE PATIENT

Many people are applying for these benefits right now due to changes caused by the pandemic.

2. BE PERSISTENT

While being patient is important, you may have to call multiple times or re-visit a website multiple times in order to get through.

3. DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Keep copies of any applications you have submitted, take notes of the times and dates you submit anything or talk to anyone, and write down the name of anyone you spoke to. Your records may be important to getting benefits.

4. KEEP ANY NOTICES YOU RECEIVE

They contain key information that you may need later.

5. DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS

If you are asked to send verification in order to get benefits, never send the original of something (i.e. social security card or driver's license), always send a copy.

6. ASK IF YOU CAN SEND VIA EMAIL / ONLINE

You should not have to mail or fax copies of verification.

7. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to appeal a denial or termination of your benefits. Read any notice you receive closely to make sure you are meeting any deadlines. You can call Legal Aid (see previous page) for help with appeals.

8. DESIGNATE SOMEONE (IF NEEDED)

If you feel overwhelmed, you can designate someone else as your representative to handle applications for you. Make sure it is someone you absolutely trust with your most personal information.



EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS & BENEFITS

The federal stimulus package has made changes to unemployment insurance with:

- Longer time periods for benefits
- Increased weekly benefit amounts
- Reduced requirements to qualify

Even if you have not qualified in the past, you may qualify now.

You can apply for unemployment benefits online at dol.georgia.gov/gdol-covid-19-information.

The federal government recently passed a number of bills to address various needs related to COVID-19:

THE FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

- Covers public agencies regardless of size, including state and local government agencies, and private entities with fewer than 500 employees.
- Full-time eligible employees receive 80 hours of paid sick leave.
- Part-time eligible employees receive paid sick leave for the hours they normally work over a 2 week period.
- Workers can take time off under certain conditions, including if you are currently under a quarantine or isolation order (like shelter in place).
- Some exceptions may apply, [see additional information here](#).

THE EMERGENCY FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE EXPANSION ACT

- Covers employees who are unable to work due to caring for a child whose school or daycare has closed.
- You may be eligible if you are employed by a public agency of any size or an employer with less than 500 workers and have worked for at least 30 calendar days.
- Eligible employees may receive up to 12 weeks of leave with the first 10 days of leave being unpaid (can use emergency sick leave, vacation, PTO, or built up sick time).

EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE ACT

- Covers employees who need sick time leave related to COVID-19.
- You may be eligible if you are employed by a public agency, of any size, or an employer with less than 500 workers.
- Eligible employees may receive up to 80 hours of emergency paid sick time (employers can offer more).
- Some exceptions may apply, [see additional information here.](#)

THE CARES ACT

- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation: eligible employees may be able to receive up to 13 weeks of additional unemployment benefits.
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance: employees not eligible for regular unemployment insurance, including the self-employed, may be eligible for 39 weeks of benefits.
- Pandemic Unemployment Compensation: eligible employees may receive \$600 a week in addition to other benefits they may qualify for.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Filing for Unemployment during the Covid-19 Crisis \(video\)](#)
- [EEOC Issues Guidance for the ADA & Pandemic Preparations in the Workplace](#)
- [Working While Pregnant & Parenting: Georgia](#)



the work and family legal center

Stay up to date with employment benefits here. If you are a worker and have questions about your rights, see A Better Balance's *Know Your Rights* FAQ here.

Free and confidential hotline at 1-833-NEED-ABB
(1-833-633-3222)

www.abetterbalance.org/get-help.



Georgia Family Healthline

1-800-300-9003

M-F, 9AM - 5PM

*Your source for statewide
healthcare referrals and
information!*

Interpreters are available in
170+ languages.

Average wait time is less than
30 seconds.

Search online 24/7 at:
resourcehouse.com/hmhb/



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