Pregnancy and Birth During COVID-19

New life continues even in difficult times. If you are newly pregnant or will soon have a new baby, protecting your health and getting the care you need are very important during this time.

COVID-19 and pregnancy

- COVID-19 is a new disease so we do not know a lot about how the virus affects pregnant people.
- We do know that pregnant people with COVID-19 may be at higher risk of getting more serious illness.

Protect your health

- Get the health care you need.
- Try to stay home as much as possible and limit your contact with people outside of your household.
- Wash your hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer is you can’t wash your hands.
- Follow physical distancing guidelines.
- Wear a cloth face covering when you go outside of your home.
- Talk with your employer about how you can stay safe while working.
- If you use medications, keep a 30-day supply on hand.
- Stay up to date on vaccines. There is no COVID vaccine, but other vaccines, like the flu vaccine, help you stay healthy.

If you get sick

- Call your health care provider. Your health care provider will support you and talk to you about ways to keep the virus from spreading to others.
- Some newborns have tested positive for COVID-19 shortly after birth. It is not known whether these babies got the virus before, during or after birth.
For more information about your health and pregnancy during COVID-19, check out the following resources:

- American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists: Q&A for Patients
- Centers for Disease Control: Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

**Beginning and continuing care**
Prenatal care is important for a healthy pregnancy because it helps you and your health care provider:

- Take care of health problems before they become serious
- Make sure your baby is growing well
- Ask and answer questions and learn about your pregnancy
- Talk about ways you can feel better while you are pregnant

**Are you pregnant and need help finding health care or other support?** Oregon MothersCare can connect you to pregnancy information, help and services, including:

- Free pregnancy testing
- Oregon Health Plan (OHP) application support
- Prenatal care
- Dental care
- Other health care appointments
- Women Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition services
- Housing
- Transportation
- Other pregnancy and health-related information and services

All Oregon MothersCare services are free and available to any pregnant person regardless of their income, insurance status, or citizenship status. Click here to find an OMC Access Site near you.

**Don’t live in a community with an OMC program?**
Call 211 for help finding pregnancy-related resources in your area.
Prenatal care

- **Do not skip your prenatal care appointments.** If you are worried about going to your appointment because of COVID-19, talk to your health care provider by phone.
- Prenatal care may look different as our communities and health care providers learn to work differently during COVID-19.
- Some pregnant people may have fewer or more spaced out in-person appointments.
- You also may talk more with your health care provider over the phone or through an online video call. This is a good way for you to get the care you need while preventing the spread of virus.
- Visitors may not be allowed at in-person appointments, so check with your health care provider before you bring someone with you.
- You may be asked to wear a mask at in-person appointments.

Labor and delivery

- Talk with your health care provider about your birth plan.
- In most cases, the timing and method of delivery (vaginal birth or cesarean birth) do not need to be changed.
- If you plan to deliver at a hospital or birth center, they may be adjusting how they do things. Talk with your health care provider about what might happen during your labor and delivery.
  - There may be changes to the number of visitors allowed and how long you will stay in the hospital.
  - You may be screened for symptoms or tested for COVID-19
  - You may be required to wear a mask.
  - You may not be able to use a birthing tub.
- Be sure to mention if you are planning to have a doula with you during childbirth.

After your baby is born

- If you qualify for Oregon Health Plan (OHP), you will need to let OHP know about the birth of your baby. Your hospital or an OHP-certified community partner should be able to help with this, or you can update your information online.
- Limit your contact with people outside your household.
• As you start life with a newborn, you can find support from your local home visiting program. You can find more information about home visiting from your local public health department or from the Healthy Families Oregon website. Many local home visiting programs are continuing to provide visits remotely during this time.

• The WIC Program can help you access food and nutrition support. WIC offices are open and having appointments over the phone, by email and video chat.

• Do not skip postpartum care appointments.

• Newborns should never wear a face covering.

Managing stress
Pregnancy and welcoming a new baby can be very stressful. If you are having a hard time, there are resources to help you.

• Oregon Health Plan (OHP) Nurse Advice Line for OHP members: 1-800-562-4620

• Postpartum Support International Helpline: 1-800-944-4773, Text: 503-894-9453 (English) or 971-420-0294 (Spanish)

• Baby Blues Connection: 1-800-557-8375

• Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence: Find Help

• National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

• 211 community information center:
  ▪ CALL 211 or 1-866-698-6155
  ▪ TTY: dial 711 and call 1-866-698-6155
  ▪ TEXT your zip code to 898211 (TXT211)
  ▪ EMAIL help@211info.org

Document accessibility: For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact Mavel Morales at 1-844-882-7889, 711 TTY or OHA.ADARecommendations@dhsoha.state.or.us.