



# Safely Providing Breastmilk for Your Baby

## *After Being Diagnosed with or Exposed to COVID-19*

The health and safety of all of our patients are important to us. This handout will tell you more about breastmilk safety for patients who have or may have the coronavirus infection.

### COVID-19 and Mother's Milk

It is recommended that mothers continue to breastfeed or provide their milk even if they have or have been exposed to COVID-19. Studies have not yet found COVID-19 in mother's milk.

### Breastfeeding Your Baby

To safely breastfeed your baby, you will need to wash your hands and put on a mask first. **You will need to wear the mask the entire time your baby is close to you.**

### Pumping Breastmilk for Your Baby

If you are separated from your baby, you can remove your milk with clean hands or a breast pump, and have a healthy caregiver give the milk to the baby. It is very important to follow the instructions on the next page to remove your milk safely. The nurse can teach you how to hand express your milk or use a breast pump. The hospital can provide you a pump to use while you are here.

### Benefits of Breastmilk

Human milk produces special antibodies to help fight viruses. These antibodies are not found in formula. These antibodies are especially important to help your baby's developing immune system.



## How to Keep Your Milk Safe before and after Pumping

### Before Pumping

1. **Wash hands thoroughly** with soap and warm water for 20 seconds and dry your hands with a clean paper towel. Or you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and rub your hands for 20 seconds.
2. **Wear a mask** and keep it on the entire time you are pumping and handling the milk.
3. **Clean** the outside of the pump including the pump dials and power switch with disinfectant wipes before every use.
4. **Check the pump kit** to make sure it is clean and dry.
5. **Wash hands thoroughly** with soap and warm water for 20 seconds and dry your hands with a clean paper towel. Or you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and rub your hands for 20 seconds.

### After Pumping

1. **Wash hands thoroughly** with soap and warm water for 20 seconds and dry your hands with a clean paper towel. Or you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and rub your hands for 20 seconds.
2. **Put the lid on the milk collection container** and **label the container** with the date and time that it was pumped. The time that you write down is the time that you **started** pumping.
3. **Clean exterior of pump** including the pump dials and the power switch with disinfectant wipes.
4. **Take apart pump parts.**
5. **Wash pump parts** in your washbasin used **only for pump parts** with warm, soapy water **after every use.**
6. **Rinse pump parts well** under clear, running water.
7. **Air-dry pump parts** on clean paper towels placed on a clean countertop. The pump parts must be fully dried to prevent mold and bacteria growth!
8. **Clean pump kit** in warm, soapy water after every use.
9. **Sanitize pump kit.** When using a pump at home you can sanitize the pump kit once a day using a dishwasher if available. Make sure you use the sanitize setting on your dishwasher. If you don't have a dishwasher, you can also sanitize your pump kit by boiling it in water for 5 minutes, or by placing it in a microwave steam bag.

**Avoid sneezing or coughing on your breast pump, your pump kit, or your milk collection containers!**

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