

Pregnant during the Pandemic

Information to Know about COVID-19 in pregnancy

Attention

Here you will find general information, based on recent data from national and international health organizations.

KEEP IN MIND: information can change with new data and as more research findings are published.

It's always **VERY IMPORTANT** to ask the professionals of your prenatal services for the best care for you! Knowing your history they are able to offer the most suitable guidance for your health condition.

If I believe that I have COVID-19?

If you feel cold symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or sore throat:

Call your regional health service for guidance and **TELL THEM YOU ARE PREGNANT**. You will have priority in this service because you are in the risk group. **PLEASE NOTE:** Other symptoms, such as shortness of breath have been identified as indicative of COVID-19, but it is also frequent in pregnancies, especially in the 3rd trimester.

DO NOT PANIC - If you feel breathing difficulties, without other cold symptoms (for example, fever, cough or loss of smell and taste), probably you do not have COVID-19.

If you have a suspicion or confirmation that you have COVID-19 with persistent symptoms:

Call your prenatal care service or obstetrician to know how to proceed with your medical appointments and prenatal examinations, as well as with your plans for childbirth during the course of the illness. It's important to always keep them informed about your health status!

Stress and the Pandemic

The pandemic of the new coronavirus requires new routines that impact on our emotional state. Social isolation, for example, can increase the feelings of loneliness as well as uncertainties about COVID-19 and its consequences can result in anguish and emotional distress at this time. All of this affects our physical and mental health!

It is important that you observe all changes in your mood over the course of your pregnancy, especially negative feelings, such as sadness and anguish. In addition, you can ask the people who lives with you if they are observing any changes in your behaviour. If these feelings and changes get worse, it may be a sign of anxiety and depression. A professional specialist assistant is highly recommended. Please speak with your primary physician and do not self medicate!

How to protect yourself & others?

- It's important to maintain the good hygiene practices and social distancing, avoiding personal contact, mainly with people who have fever, cough or any other cold symptom;
- If you need to leave your home, including for a medical appointment or prenatal examination, be sure to wear a mask;
- Keeping yourself physically active is essential to guarantee you stay in good physical shape and to improve your wellbeing during pregnancy. Activities at home, like yoga, can be good options;
- Don't keep your concerns about COVID-19 to yourself: clarify your doubts with your healthcare professionals!
- If your doubts remain, you can contact your health care service to be informed about any changes in your prenatal routine.

How do I feel?

You may feel very worried about your pregnancy during this pandemic, as well as about your and your unborn child's health during this period. After all, COVID-19 is not totally understood and many people are still studying it!

Thus, it is not uncommon to have negative feelings, such as fear (of the contamination risks) and anxiety (in not knowing enough about the coronavirus), which are increased by the fact that you belong to a risk group.

How to cope with COVID-19 with a positive attitude?

Each one of us has our own way to cope with stressful situations, but some strategies and tips can be suggested for pregnant women:

- You can use social media to cope with social distancing and reduce your feelings of loneliness;
- You can also make video calls with your family and friends when it's not possible to talk face to face. Keep everyone updated with your pregnancy and your loved ones' lives.
- Do not overwhelm yourself with COVID-19 news, choose one hour of your time to search for updates. Give preference to reliable sources of information, such as the Ministry of Health or the World Health Organization (WHO);
- Please be calm and relaxed during this challenging time! You can do things like listen to relaxing music, meditate or do breathing exercises. It can help to cope with stress and manage your anxiety;
- And finally, plan and organize for the arrival of your precious child, sharing this moment with your family and friends!

EVERY PREGNANCY IS A TIME OF MANY CHALLENGES!

Treat this pandemic time as another challenge that you and your baby will be able to overcome!

If in doubt, call to:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

Medical emergency: 911

For more information, access here:  @lepids.ufrj

<https://linktr.ee/ftpsicovida>

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