COVID-19 AND PREGNANCY

We Care Together!

St. Maarten Medical Center
WHAT IS COVID-19

COVID—19 is a respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and has now been detected in more than 100 countries across the world.

HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?

The virus spreads from person-to-person contact through droplets after a person coughs or sneezes into the air. The virus can spread through contaminated surfaces which have these droplets on them (doorknobs, etc.). It is important to avoid touching your face (eyes, nose and mouth) as this is causes spread.

What are the symptoms?

Fever  Cough  Fatigue  Sore throat  Shortness of breath

Symptoms can vary from mild to severe but include fever, cough, fatigue, and shortness of breath.

PREVENTION

How do I protect myself against COVID-19 infection?

Unlike influenza (Flu), there is no vaccine available for COVID-19 at this time.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure. The following prevention measures are recommended:
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap is not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, do not go to work and do not travel. Stay home.
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and throw it directly into a trash bin, then wash your hands with soap and water. If you do not have a tissue, cough/sneeze into your upper arm or sleeve; avoid using your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

**Should I start wearing a mask while at work or in public?**
We do **NOT** recommend people that are well wear facemasks.

**COVID-19 AND PREGNANCY**

**I am pregnant. Do I need to take special precautions?**
Pregnant women should follow the same precautions as non-pregnant patients (see above Prevention section).

**Are pregnant women with COVID-19 infection at higher risk for complications?**
We do not know the answer to this question. High fevers during the first trimester of pregnancy can increase the risk of certain birth defects. It is important to contact your healthcare provider if you have a fever. It is also unknown if infants with COVID-19 or those exposed in utero will be affected. COVID-19 could produce premature contractions.

**Can pregnant women pass the virus to their baby during pregnancy and delivery?**
The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly by close contact with an infected person through respiratory droplets (in the air). It is still unknown whether a pregnant woman with COVID-19 can transmit the virus to her fetus or neonate through vertical transmission (before or during delivery). In the limited known cases, none of the infants born to mothers with COVID-19 tested positive for the virus and the virus was not detected in amniotic fluid or breastmilk samples.
Can nursing mothers pass the virus to their baby while breastfeeding?
We do not know whether mothers with COVID-19 can transmit the virus via breastmilk.

The CDC recommends that a mother with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should take all possible precautions to avoid spreading the virus to her infant. This includes washing hands before touching the infant and wearing a facemask while breastfeeding. If expressing breast milk (manual or electric), wash your hands before touching the pump or bottle parts and follow manufacturer’s recommendations for proper pump cleaning after each use. If possible, have someone is well feed the expressed milk to the infant. (Centers for Disease Control, Pregnancy and Feeding: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html).

CHILDREN
Are children more susceptible to the virus that causes COVID-19 compared with the general population?
No. There is no evidence that children are more susceptible. In fact, most confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been in adults; however there have been reported infections in children. Children should:
- wash their hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- avoid close contact with people who are sick
- keep up to date on routine vaccines (such an influenza vaccine) to protect themselves from infection.

Are the symptoms of COVID-19 different in children as compared to adults?
In the limited reports that are available, children have described cold-like symptoms such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Most children had mild symptoms. Although uncommon, severe symptoms have been reported in children. Children with underlying health conditions may be at increased risk of severe infection, as with other respiratory illnesses.

Are there any treatments for children with COVID-19?
Currently, there are no anti-viral medications recommended for COVID-19 infection. It is important for the child to rest and drink plenty of fluids.
MEDICAL INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

What should I do if I develop symptoms of a respiratory infection?
If you have a fever and cough, follow the steps below to help limit the spread to people in your home and community:

- Stay at home except to for medical care. You should not go to work, school, or public areas.
- Separate yourself at home as much as possible from family.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Wash your hands after touching your face, before eating, after using the bathroom. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol.
- Avoid sharing personal household items.
- Clean all high touch surfaces every day such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, phones, computer keyboards.
- Monitor your symptoms. If you feel your symptoms are worsening, contact your healthcare provider.

NON-EMERGENCY CARE

- If you are experiencing mild symptoms and have questions or need advice, please call the Collective Prevention Services (CPS) hotline at 914 (or +1 721 542-1122 or +1 721 542-1222).
- Please do not come to the Hospital unless instructed to do by CPS.

EMERGENCY CARE

- If the patient requires acute emergency care (e.g. difficulty breathing), please call the Ambulance Services hotline at 912 (or +1 721 542-2111) for further assistance and/or instructions.
How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds

0. Wet hands with water;
1. Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;
2. Rub hands palm to palm;
3. Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;
4. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
5. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;
6. Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
7. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
8. Rinse hands with water;
9. Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;
10. Use towel to turn off faucet;
11. Your hands are now safe.
How to Handrub?

RUB HANDS FOR HAND HYGIENE! WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED

Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds

1a Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;
1b Rub hands palm to palm;

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3 Right palm over left dorsum with interfaced fingers and vice versa;
4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;

6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
8 Once dry, your hands are safe.
Contact information

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References

Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
Pregnancy and Feeding.

What to do if you are sick.

If are sick or caring for someone.

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