



Public Health and Covid-19

Topic
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Potential impact of Covid-19 in this topic area
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public health is about helping people to stay healthy and protecting them from threats to their health.• During the current pandemic it is important to remain vigilant around maintaining public health messages
Current key guidance for this topic – clinical care and advice for women
Smoking <p>Evidence from the pandemic so far indicates that people who smoke are at much higher risk of becoming seriously unwell if they contract COVID-19. It is therefore particularly important to support women and their partners to stop smoking.</p> <p>Quitting smoking in pregnancy can make a significant difference to birth outcomes, reducing the risk of stillbirth, low birth weight and sudden infant death. As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak some stop smoking interventions have been reduced or suspended. Women should be reminded of the risks and have access to support to quit through video calling, texts and timely provision of nicotine replacement therapy.</p> <p>Refresh your 'Very Brief Advice' technique on smoking in pregnancy: https://www.ilearn.rcm.org.uk/course/info.php?id=259</p>
Resources https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/?tabname=advice-and-support https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/smoking-pregnant/
Financial hardship and social inclusion <p>The COVID-19 has triggered changes to employment that could cause financial hardship. Support and advice may be found from the UK government and 3rd sector agencies.</p>
Resources https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19 https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/ https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/emergency-food/ https://england.shelter.org.uk/ https://maternityaction.org.uk/advice-line/
Domestic Abuse <p>Measures to control the spread of COVID-19 have brought about social distancing and isolation that means some people will be more vulnerable to domestic abuse. Agencies are reporting a rise in incidents linked with COVID 19 and</p>

extra vigilance is therefore necessary, especially where face to face appointments are being reduced or undertaken virtually. It is vitally important that midwives are responsive to requests for confidential advice. Consider precautionary measures for families with known risk factors.

Refresh your knowledge with RCM i-learn

<https://www.ilearn.rcm.org.uk/course/info.php?id=633>

Resources:

National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0800 999 5428

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-advice-for-survivors/>

Rape Crisis services - www.rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/want-to-talk/

Respect Phonenumber - a confidential helpline, email and webchat service for domestic abuse perpetrators and those supporting them: 0808 8024040 or www.respectphonenumber.org.uk

Resources for Scotland

<https://womensaid.scot/>

<https://sdafmh.org.uk/>

Infant feeding

There is currently no clinical evidence to suggest that the virus can be transmitted through breastmilk. Infection can be spread to the baby in the same way as to anyone in close contact with you. The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of the virus through breastmilk or by being in close contact with your child, however, this will be an individual decision and can be discussed with your midwife, health visitor or GP by telephone. If you wish to breastfeed, take precautions to limit the potential spread of Covid-19 to the baby

- Handwashing before touching the baby, breast pump or bottles
- Avoid coughing or sneezing on the baby while feeding
- Wear a facemask while feeding or caring for the baby, where available
- Where a breast pump is used, follow recommendations for cleaning after each use
- Consider asking someone who is well to feed the baby
- For babies who are bottle fed with formula or expressed milk, strict adherence to sterilisation guidelines is advised
- Where mothers are expressing breastmilk in hospital, a dedicated breast pump should be used

Resources

<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/expressing-and-bottle-feeding/bottle-feeding/>

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/infant-feeding-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

NCT helpline 0300 330 0700

<https://www.parentclub.scot/>

Telephone support

National Breastfeeding Helpline: **tel 0300 100 0212 (9.30am-9.30pm)**

[Association of Breastfeeding Mothers](#): **tel 0300 330 5453**

Breastfeeding Network: tel 0300 100 0210 (9.30am-9.30pm)

La Leche League: tel 0345 120 2918

National Childbirth Trust (NCT): tel 0300 330 0700 (8am-midnight)

Bengali/ Sylheti Line - 08448564003

Online Resources

Global Health Media Breastfeeding videos- <https://globalhealthmedia.org/videos>

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/if-breastfeeding-hurts-05-may-2015/>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/bottle-feeding-resources/>

<https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/parents-carers>

https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/04/happybaby_leaflet_web.pdf

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/sleep-and-night-time-resources/>

<https://www.basisonline.org.uk>

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/drugs-factsheets/>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/10/Having-meaningful-conversations-with-mothers.pdf>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/infant-feeding-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

Exercise

Whether socially isolating or distancing, continuing to exercise in pregnancy is vitally important to maintaining a healthy weight, good circulation and mental wellbeing. Many safe exercise routines are suitable for the home, such as yoga. Encourage exercise and consider including tips and suggestions when running virtual antenatal classes.

Resources

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pregnancy-exercise/>

<https://www.tommys.org/pregnancy-information/im-pregnant/exercise-pregnancy/exercise-faqs/it-safe-exercise-pregnancy>

Nutrition

A balanced diet is important and with some products in short supply, women may find they are looking for replacements for fresh foods. Suggest frozen vegetables, such as spinach or broccoli, dried and tinned fruits. Experimenting with new cereals, wholegrains and natural yogurt can provide essential fibre, vitamins and minerals. For families that qualify, signpost to Healthy Start for vitamin supplements and additional financial support. For women who are particularly vulnerable to coronavirus due to an underlying condition such as heart or lung disease, signpost to government registration for assistance, which can include assistance with food delivery.

Resources

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/healthy-pregnancy-diet/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/pregnancy/healthy-eating-pregnancy/>

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Government assistance for vulnerable individuals <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>

Infection control

Access to detailed guidance on hygiene and infection control, in general and in healthcare settings.

Resources

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-prevent-germs-from-spreading/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>

References and links to online and virtual support and guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/>

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>