GOING HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL AFTER BIRTH WHEN YOU HAVE COVID-19 OR ARE WAITING FOR TEST RESULTS
8/03/20

SUMMARY: The updated AAP guidelines released on 7/27/20 recommend rooming in for all infants born to COVID-19 positive mothers, as long as mother and baby are both well enough to be together. Specific recommendations for home care are based on infant testing.

If the infant cannot be tested, then treat the infant as if virus-positive for the 14-day period of observation. Mother should still maintain precautions until she meets the criteria for non-infectivity.

A. FOR A BABY WHO TESTED NEGATIVE FOR COVID-19:

How Should Caregivers Keep Baby Safe at Home?

Any caregiver that has tested COVID-19 positive should use a mask and hand-hygiene when directly caring for the infant, until (a) afebrile for 24 hours without use of antipyretics, (b) at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared (or, in the case of asymptomatic women identified only by obstetric screening tests, at least 10 days have passed since the positive test), and (c) symptoms have improved.

Infants will be discharged to families where other caregivers have been exposed to COVID or may have COVID infection themselves. Other caregivers in the home should use masks and hand hygiene before and after contact with the infant until their infection has resolved. Every effort should be taken to provide infection-prevention education to all caregivers of the infant, which includes not only written education but also verbal education in person, via telephone or virtually. Interpreter services should be utilized where appropriate.

How Should Mom Breastfeed Safely?

Viral particles have been found in breastmilk, but research does not indicate these can cause disease in the infant. It is well known that breastmilk is full of ingredients that all work together to help babies develop a strong immune system and fight infections in their immediate environment. Breast-pumping milk for the baby is recommended if the infant is not able to breastfeed. Careful factors need to be taken to make sure babies can breastfeed safely:
When near or breastfeeding the baby:

- (1) FIRST perform excellent hand washing (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lisgnbMfKvI)
- (2) THEN put on a mask to help contain secretions from your nose and mouth.
- (3) AFTER breastfeeding or being with baby, take off the mask and wash hands again.

When pumping breastmilk:

- Wash hands for 20 seconds and put on a mask before touching breasts.
- If using a breast-pump, follow directions for pump cleaning after each use. https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/healthychildcare/infantfeeding/breastpump.html
- If possible, have someone who is not sick feed pumped milk to your baby.
- When not breast-pumping, keep your breasts covered so they don’t become covered with infectious droplets from your nose and mouth. If these droplets do get on your breasts, wash them with soap and water or a germicidal wipe.

B. FOR A BABY WHO TESTED POSITIVE BUT HAS NO SYMPTOMS:

The infant should have frequent follow-up visits with a caregiver (either by phone, telemedicine, or in-office) through 14 days after birth.

If mother is COVID-19+ on discharge, she may care for the infant as in Part A above. Guidelines below are meant to protect uninfected caregivers.

Use precautions to prevent household spread from infant to caregivers; use this CDC guidance (summarized below) on use of masks, gloves and hand hygiene by caregivers in the home environment and by healthcare staff in the outpatient office practice.

- Minimize contact with the baby as much as able.
- When in contact with the baby, wear a mask.
- Before touching the baby, wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- When in the same room as the baby, try to keep baby 6 feet away when possible.
- Wash and disinfect the area the baby is in often
- Do infant laundry wearing gloves if possible