



BREASTFEEDING & COVID-19 IN HAWAI'I

INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

1 BREASTFEEDING PROTECTS

Breastfeeding helps protect your infant from many illnesses. The safest, ideal nutrition for an infant is human milk, and breastfeeding has many health benefits. COVID-19 transmission through breastmilk appears unlikely, based on limited data available.

2 CONTINUE BREASTFEEDING

Parents with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 should continue recommended feeding with necessary hygiene precautions: initiate breastfeeding within 1 hour after birth, exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, first solid food at 6 months, and continue breastfeeding for 2+ years. If mother is too unwell and donor milk is unavailable, provide safe instant formula.

3 SAFE FEEDING PRACTICES

All breastfeeding parents should wash hands handling infant. Clean pump parts and bottles after each use, and clean all touched surfaces.

Parents with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 should wear a face mask while breastfeeding. Refer to manufacturer to disinfect pump parts and bottles after each use. If mother is too unwell to breastfeed, bottle feeding can be done, preferably by someone with no signs of illness wearing a face mask.

4 NUTRITION

Consuming health foods is important for breastfeeding mothers and young children. Although it can be difficult, especially during a pandemic, do your best to eat lots of fruits and veggies, whole grains, and protein. Food sources can be fresh, dried, tinned, or frozen. Try to avoid sugary drink and foods high in fat, sugar, and salt.

5 AVOID UNNEEDED FORMULA

When breastmilk is unavailable, infants may receive infant formula in addition to/instead of breastmilk. Do not feed your infant (<1 year) cow's milk or milk substitutes not made for infants, as they can be dangerous. Ask your healthcare provider for safe formula and feeding recommendations.

*If a sanitized bottle is not available, a clean cup or spoon may be used.



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1 BREASTFEEDING

Check the links below!

- **Virtual perinatal support and community resources:** Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawai'i provides state perinatal resources, including telehealth/virtual support for mental health, lactation, smoking cessation, doula, safe sleep, new parent support, and childbirth education. Visit www.hmhb-hawaii.org, email info@hmhb-hawaii.org, or call **(808) 737-5805**.
- **Find lactation support on your island:** Breastfeeding Hawai'i maintains a list of resources around the state. <https://bfhawaii.org/index.php/lactation-support>
- **Free two-way breastfeeding text support:** Nest Breastfeeding Peer Lactation Counselors and Consultants provide ongoing feeding and parenting support. Visit <https://nestfamilies.org> or call/text **(808) 212-9324**.
- **Free virtual parenting groups:** Family Hui Hawai'i supports parents through virtual groups and other resources. Visit <https://familyhuihawaii.org>, email jade@familyhuihawaii.org, or call **(808) 230-7112**.
- **National Women's Health and Breastfeeding Helpline:** Trained specialists can answer questions about women's health and provide breastfeeding support. Call **1 (800) 994-9662** (M-F 3AM - 12PM HST), <https://womenshealth.gov/about-us/what-we-do/programs-and-activities/helpline>

- **Breastfeeding support and advocacy for military families:** MOM2MOM Breastfeeding in Combat Boots supports military families, and they have a local chapter. <https://mom2momglobal.org>
- **When breastmilk is unavailable:** Get info on safe infant formula prep and storage. <https://cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddlernutrition/formula-feeding/infant-formula-preparation-and-storage.html>

2 FOOD SECURITY

- **Food Assistance (SNAP) and Financial Assistance:** <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/1961-2>
- **WIC (Women, Infants and Children):** <https://health.hawaii.gov/wic>
- **Hawai'i Food Basket:** <https://hawaiifoodbasket.org>
- **Activate Hawai'i Aid:** <https://www.activatehawaiiid.org>
- **Hawai'i Children Action Network, COVID-19 Resources Database:** Find information about food, child care, and other resources with an interactive map. <https://covid19.hawaii-can.org>



CREATED FOR MOTHERS & FAMILIES
HAWAII MATERNAL & INFANT HEALTH COLLABORATIVE
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION STRATEGY
[HTTPS://HAWAIIACTIONSTRATEGY.ORG/TEAM-1](https://hawaiiactionstrategy.org/team-1)