

## **Pregnancy & COVID-19**

Hi, I'm Dr. Elena Martinez. An OBGYN Specialist at Kaiser Permanente.

With the world quickly evolving in response to Coronavirus, many of you are concerned about COVID-19 and what you can do to keep yourself and your pregnancy healthy.

COVID-19 is a new disease, and information on how the virus affects pregnant people is limited. Based on the most current information from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, pregnant people might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared to non-pregnant people.

Additionally, there may be an increased risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as preterm birth, among pregnant people with COVID-19.

Although some babies have tested positive for the virus shortly after birth, we don't yet know if the virus can be transmitted during pregnancy or childbirth.

Pregnant women experience changes in their immune systems that make them more likely to get viral respiratory infections like the flu, but there are proactive steps that you can take to protect your health.

Here's what you should always do.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Hand sanitizer that is 60% or more alcohol-based also works when you can't get to soap and water.

Avoid people who are sick with cough, fever, or shortness of breath.

Wear a cloth face cover at all times in public, regardless of symptoms.

Stay away from groups as much as possible and maintain social distancing of six feet when possible.

Limit visitors to your home.

Routinely clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces like door knobs, light switches, and phones.

Make sure you stock up on important and frequently used supplies when possible so that you can limit your visits to stores and pharmacies.

Avoid touching your eyes, your nose, or your mouth with unwashed hands. And if this is a habit, try putting some garlic or lemon on your hands to avoid it.

Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. If you use a tissue, throw it out and then wash your hands afterwards.

Although these are uncertain times, following these safety precautions are an important step towards your wellbeing and that of your baby.