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BRIEF19

A daily review of covid-19 research and policy.

Breaking News Brief19

Pregnant mother with SARS-CoV-2 delivers virus-free baby.

A New England Journal of Medicine report outlined the case, suggesting some approaches that may keep infants safe.

By Laura Dean, MD.

The *New England Journal of Medicine* today published a case study detailing the circumstances of the delivery of a full-term baby to a covid-19 positive patient at Washington Medical Center, Washington DC. There were no complications reported. The mother had typical covid-19 symptoms and during labor was tested and found to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. After birth, the umbilical cord was promptly clamped, and the infant was removed from the mother's room. The infant's tested negative for the virus. The mother rapidly improved and was discharged home with the baby on almost one week later.

The data on how coronavirus affects pregnant women has been limited. Initial studies suggest that pregnant women are not at a greater risk of developing severe symptoms. However, pregnant women with severe infections like the flu are at greater risk of complications in general. Last week, *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology MFM* [published findings](#) related to seven confirmed covid-19 positive patients in labor, two of whom initially had no symptoms but that subsequently required intensive care. In all of the reported cases, the neonates tested negative for the virus shortly after birth. It remains unknown whether pregnant women are more likely to get sick from the virus or what, if any, risk infants face when their mother has the virus.

Increasingly, hospitals are taking steps to temporarily separate mothers with suspected or confirmed Covid-19 from their babies at birth, with some facilities suggesting a prolonged quarantine for up to 14 days after birth. Findings remain similarly murky regarding possible risks of breastfeeding. For now, providers are encouraging nursing mothers with SARS-CoV-2 to use a special pump and to have healthy family members feed the baby.

Brief19 is a daily executive summary of covid-19-related medical research, news, and public policy. It was founded and created by frontline emergency medicine physicians with expertise in medical research critique, health policy, and public policy.

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