

Postpartum Doula & In-Home Support

A TOOLKIT FOR POSTPARTUM
DOULAS DURING THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC

According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention:



“ IN GENERAL, THE MORE PEOPLE YOU ARE AROUND, THE CLOSER YOU INTERACT WITH THEM, AND THE LONGER THAT INTERACTION, THE HIGHER YOUR RISK OF GETTING AND SPREADING COVID-19. CONSIDER THE LEVEL OF RISK WHEN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO GO OUT OR INTERACT WITH PEOPLE WHO DO NOT LIVE WITH YOU.

UPDATED DECEMBER 28, 2020 ”

Disclaimer: This information is not a replacement for medical advice or local government and health department guidelines. These recommendations are to help lower risk, but does not make in-home support risk-free. Virtual support is recommended when possible. These recommendations are compiled from the World Health Organization, Canada Public Health Services, the CDC, and Annie Frisbee, IBCLC, The compiled ideas have been put together by DONA International's Education Committee on Postpartum Doulas.



Things to consider during or before offering in-home support...

TOPICS FOR REFLECTION

What type of PPE you will use and when: masks, gloves, protective clothing, etc.

What type of PPE you expect them to use during your visits

Maintaining six feet of distance between adults

Proper hand washing

Sanitizing of high-touch surfaces

Food prep safety

Exposure and/or illness policies (ex: under what circumstances will services need to be cancelled or rescheduled.)

-Consider adding a hold-harmless agreement to your contract, with signatures

COMMUNICATION IS KEY!



Before providing in-home support to your client, clear communication is important.

Let them know up front, in writing, what your policies and procedures are regarding Covid-19, what you will be doing to minimize risk, and what is expected of the clients.

What if...what do we know?



What do we know about COVID-19 in pregnancy and after?

Given how new this virus is, we still have very little data on how it might affect pregnant people and newborns. Guidelines from the CDC outline recommendations for how to support pregnant and laboring people with Coronavirus. There is currently no evidence that the virus is spread from pregnant person to baby in-utero, or that it is transmitted in human milk.

What if I feel ill during a postpartum appointment?

If at any point while in a client's home, you develop a fever of 100.4oF/38C or greater, or any other symptoms consistent with COVID-19, keep your mask on, inform the client, and leave the home. Make sure to arrange for medical evaluation and testing. Provide client information on cleaning and disinfecting their home.

What if I test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive for COVID-19, you will need to notify any clients you visited during the period from two days before your symptom onset (or two days before your test if you are asymptomatic) until you meet criteria to discontinue isolation.

What if my client(s) have been exposed to COVID-19?

If your client has been exposed, has symptoms, or tests positive for COVID-19: Cancel your in-person appointment, and encourage your client to contact their healthcare provider or help them contact their provider, if assistance is needed.

Pre-Screening Considerations

Before joining clients in-home, please consider the following:



- Stay home if you are having symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and do not return to work until it is safe to do so.
- Follow CDC and WHO recommended precautions if you have been exposed to a person with COVID-19, even if you are well.
- Do not work with clients in-person until at least 14 days after your last possible exposure to the virus.
- Take your temperature before the start of each work shift. Stay home if you have a fever of 100.4oF/38C or higher.



RECOMMEND

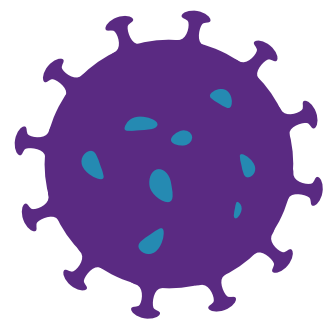


Phone-screen clients for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or exposure to a person with COVID-19 before each visit by asking:

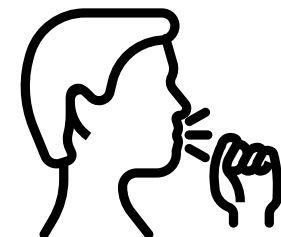
“In the past two weeks have you or someone you live with had contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?”



“Do you have any of these other symptoms?”



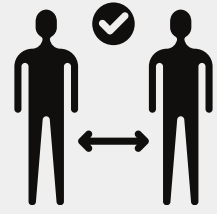
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|------------------------|------------------------------|
| ■ Shortness of breath | ■ Sore Throat |
| ■ Difficulty breathing | ■ New loss of taste or smell |
| ■ Fatigue | ■ Congestion or runny nose |
| ■ Muscle or body aches | ■ Nausea or vomiting |
| ■ Headache | ■ Diarrhea |



“Do you have a fever or have you felt hot or feverish in the last two days? Are you experiencing shaking, chills, or sweating? Do you feel warm to the touch?”

“Do you have a new or worsening cough today?”

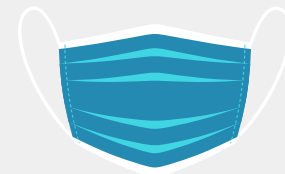
BEFORE ARRIVING AT EACH CLIENT'S HOME, EVALUATE YOURSELF FOR SYMPTOMS.



STAY DISTANCED

Stay at least 6 feet away from clients and others in the home, including pets, when possible.

Remember that people may be able to spread SARS-CoV-2 even if they do not show symptoms. Consider all close interactions (within 6 feet) as a potential source of exposure.



USE A MASK

Masks may not protect the wearer, but may keep the wearer from spreading the virus to others.

Learn how to put on and take off a mask and change your mask after each home visit; use a new mask for each new visit; wash cloth masks after every use.



WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You do not need to wear gloves if you wash your hands often (unless they are already required for specific job-related tasks).

Use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.



DON'T TOUCH

Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Do not remove mask for coughs and sneezes.

Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissues if not wearing a mask. Throw used tissues in the trash and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer, if soap and water are not available.

Wash your hands, especially at these key times:

- As soon as you enter a client's home
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before and after eating food
- Before and after physical contact with a client or their baby.
- Before putting on and after touching or removing masks
- After using the restroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching animals or pets, their food, or supplies
- After changing a diaper
- After contact with surfaces frequently touched by multiple people
- After cleaning surfaces frequently touched by multiple people
- After leaving a client's home
- After leaving a public place

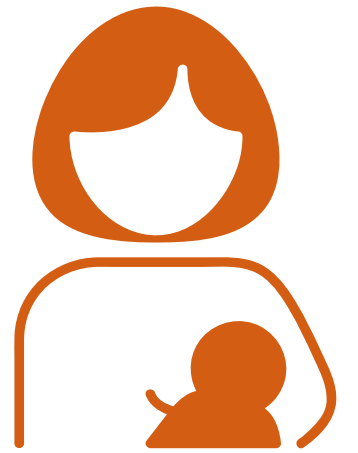


Diapering

When diapering a child, wash your hands and wash the child's hands before you begin, and wear gloves. Follow safe diaper changing procedures:

- Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
- Clean the child
- Remove trash (soiled diaper and wipes)
- Replace diaper
- Wash child's hands
- Clean up diapering station
- Wash hands

Washing, Feeding, or Holding a Child:



It is important to comfort crying, sad, and/or anxious infants and toddlers, and they often need to be held. To the extent possible, when washing, feeding, or holding very young children protect yourself by:

- Wearing an over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- Wash your hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. You should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash your hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the child care center or home-based child care.
- Wash your hands before and after handling bottles. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher or by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and hot water.

WHAT DOULAS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PERSONAL PROTECTION

VIDEO RESOURCES:

While in the home, be prepared to mask, social distance, wash and sanitize. These PPE and sanitizing videos can help prepare you. While homes may not require full PPE, becoming familiar with the practice is important.



Why clean hands are so important



Donning protective gear (putting on)



Safer hand washing



Doffing protective gear (taking off)



Protect YOURSELF & Others!

IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR OUR DOULAS

Healthy individuals are at low risk of severe complications from Coronavirus:

- Get good, restful sleep
- Eat a healthy balanced diet
- Exercise
- Balance work with rest
- Practice meditation and other mindfulness and/or spiritual practices for your mental health
- Boost your immunity and avoid getting sick
- Implement social distancing as appropriate



Protect YOURSELF & Others!



THE BEST WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF INCLUDE:

- Washing your hands often with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing; going to the bathroom and before and after eating or preparing food
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands and at all times when possible
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Stay home when you are sick

Resources

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE TOGETHER

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/in-home-social-services.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/healthprofessionals/>

[infection-prevention-control-covid-19-interim-guidance-home-care-settings.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-control-covid-19-interim-guidance-home-care-settings.html)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UklZZR1-TGzfqEJM9ekFuNVux1E-XddA/view>

https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

