

Management of well infants born to mothers with suspected or known COVID-19

This document serves as guidance for the management for well neonates born to mothers with known or suspected (PUI) COVID-19. Neonates who require NICU-level care will be transferred to the NICU in a closed incubator by healthcare providers wearing appropriate PPE. Neonates who require standard level I nursery care will be managed under the following guidelines.

- 1) Due to physical limitations on the postpartum units, co-location of the mother and newborn in the same hospital room on labor and delivery and on the postpartum unit may occur. If possible and accepted by the mother, ill mother and baby should be separated following delivery. The neonate should be transported to the postpartum unit in a closed incubator by a healthcare provider wearing appropriate PPE.
- 2) The following measures will be implemented to achieve separation of neonate from ill mother and reduce the risk of viral spread from mother to child.
 - a. Ideally, the neonate should be cared for by a healthy adult, not the ill mother. The healthy adult should use appropriate PPE.
 - b. The ill mother and the neonate should be separated by a distance ≥ 6 feet if possible.
 - c. If possible, a curtain or another physical barrier should separate the newborn from the ill mother.
 - d. If 6 feet of separation is not possible due to facility physical limitations, the baby should be maintained in a closed incubator in the room with the ill mother.
 - e. If no other healthy adult is present in the room to care for the newborn or if the mother refuses to be separated from her newborn, the mother should put on a facemask and practice hand hygiene before each feeding or other close contact with the newborn. The facemask should remain in place during contact with the newborn. These practices should continue while the mother is on transmission-based precautions in the healthcare facility.
 - f. A dedicated isolation nursery may be made available if facility physical resources allow. This nursery will be closed to visitors and staffed by health care providers using appropriate PPE. Infants admitted to the isolation nursery will be cohorted as PUIs pending SARS-CoV2 testing. Infants admitted to the isolation nursery will remain in the isolation nursery until discharged from the hospital.
- 3) During temporary separation, mothers who intend to breastfeed should be encouraged to express breast milk to establish and maintain milk supply. A dedicated breast pump should be provided. Prior to expressing breast milk, mothers should practice hand hygiene. After each pumping session, all pumping parts that come into contact with breast milk should be thoroughly washed. This expressed breast milk should be fed to the newborn by a healthy caregiver.
- 4) If an ill mother wishes to feed at the breast, she should put on a facemask and practice hand hygiene before each feeding.
- 5) Discharge of the ill mother and neonate should follow regular post-partum practices barring other medical indications for a lengthened hospital stay.
- 6) Appropriate community-based precautions and/or quarantine upon discharge should be recommended based on current CDC, New York State, and/or institutional guidelines.
- 7) For infants with pending testing results or who test negative for the virus that causes COVID-19 upon hospital discharge, caretakers should take steps to reduce the risk of community-based transmission to the infant.