

melomag

Free Health Guide

Issue 38 | 2020

INFLUENZA,
CORONAVIRUS
OR JUST A
COMMON
COLD

MANAGEMENT
OF PAIN IN LABOUR

WHY ANTENATAL
CARE IS ESSENTIAL

FOCUS ON
CORONAVIRUS



MELOMED
PRIVATE HOSPITALS

BABY TALK
NEW BABY FAQ 12

THE LATEST HEALTH
NEWS AND VIEWS 2

FIRST AID: CARING FOR
SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 26

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12



08



16



20



24



26

WHAT'S INSIDE

02 Health News & Views

06 Infographic: Influenza, Coronavirus or Just a Common Cold

08 Need to Know: Management of Pain in Labour

12 Baby Talk: New Baby FAQ

16 All About: Veganism & Diabetes

20 Wellbeing: Why Antenatal Care is Essential

22 Just for Fun: Lockdown Activities to Keep the Kids Busy

24 Recipe: Delicious & Easy Recipes During Lockdown

26 First Aid: Caring For Someone with COVID-19 at Home



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HEALTH NEWS & VIEWS



HIT BY CORONAVIRUS PANIC?

Experts say panic is a natural (but unhelpful) response to major crises like COVID-19. Now is not the time to panic. Really. You might be creating the perfect environment for coronavirus to thrive as increasing evidence suggests that psychological stress makes us more vulnerable to illness. If you're stressed out, you're more likely to get sick.

Can stressful events like coronavirus panic actually make humans more likely to contract a disease? Can they hinder our recovery from hard-hitting illnesses

like heart disease and cancer? Can they slow the healing of wounds?

Increasing evidence suggests that stress may indeed affect the immune system in these and other ways.

A study in the New England Journal of Medicine actually found that **higher psychological stress levels resulted in a higher likelihood of catching the common cold.**

There is thus enough evidence to convince us that we should find healthy ways to keep our stress levels

down, which is advice we got from our grandmothers:

EAT RIGHT, EXERCISE, GET ENOUGH SLEEP, AND LAUGH (A LOT).

It's probably a good idea to cut back on TV news and rather watch a comedy. Laughter and humour increase the activity of germ-fighting T-cells, trigger the release of pain-killing endorphins, and slow the production of the potentially harmful hormones, adrenaline and cortisol. ■


Source: Consumer Health Day at: consumer.healthday.com/encyclopedia/stress-management-37/stress-health-news-640/the-immune-system-and-stress-645924

Health Tip

Regular exercise is an important way to reduce stress, combat anxiety and strengthen your immune system. Keep exercising at home during lockdown.



THANK YOU



We thank all dedicated staff and doctors nationwide who are working tirelessly to curb the coronavirus (covid19) pandemic.

Your hard work and motivation in this fight is highly appreciated.

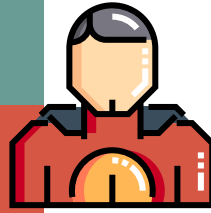
CLEAN HANDS **SAVE** LIVES



PLEASE
SANITIZE
YOUR HANDS.

CURIOSITY IS A SUPER POWER

Studies continue to show that those who regularly express curiosity tend to be positively motivated and generally happier.



CURIOSITY BOOSTS HAPPINESS

When we experience curiosity, we are willing to leave the familiar and routine and take risks, even if it makes us feel anxious and uncomfortable.”

In other words, a sense of curiosity fuels motivation, excitement, and wonder. In turn, it boosts our happiness as we reach past the familiar and continue to grow.

CURIOSITY HELPS US GROW

By maintaining a “curiosity mindset,” we push ourselves to both ask questions and listen to others. Hearing these new perspectives helps us better understand the world around us. It connects and strengthens our relationships, and it helps us grow as individuals.

CURIOSITY INCREASES KNOWLEDGE

It probably goes without saying that a healthy sense of curiosity also increases one’s knowledge. When we’re fueled by questions, excitement, and genuine interest, we’re motivated to actually learn these new subjects. We find ways to connect with seemingly unrelated information, which helps makes learning easier and more enjoyable.

CURIOSITY KEEPS YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY

Being intellectually active and stimulated throughout one’s lifespan, is protective against late-life dementia. In other words, curiosity is like exercise for your mind. It keeps your brain agile, fresh, and in tip-top shape.

CURIOSITY HELPS YOU TAKE A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Having a curious mind inspires us to look at challenges as opportunities rather than setbacks. We have an easier time seeing potential strengths in each situation, which helps us both learn and grow. What’s more, a curious mind encourages us to look at circumstances through many different lenses, which grants us a deeper understanding of the situation at hand.

Source: <https://mbusybeingawesome.com/5-benefits-of-being-curious-3/>

DONE SOME PANIC BUYING? NOW WHAT?

Stretch your groceries and meals by following these freezing tips:

DON'T FREEZE:

- Eggs – hard boiled eggs will get rubbery and in-shell eggs will expand and crack
- Fruits and veggies – foods with HIGH water contents will get mushy and limp (i.e. watermelon, cucumbers, oranges, tomatoes, and lettuce)
- Raw potatoes
- Cream or egg-based products

FREEZE:

- Casseroles and soups
- Fruits and veggies – LOWER in water content (i.e. strawberries, peppers, beans, blueberries and carrots) Frozen veggies make great additions to soups or one pot meals. Use fruits for smoothies, baking or snacks!
- Meat – Raw and cooked
- Butter and margarine
- Bread

Source: UMR Healthy You magazine

INFLUENZA, CORONAVIRUS OR JUST A COMMON COLD?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic, a “global emergency”. It is thus no surprise that more and more people are beginning to wonder... Is that tickle in my throat, the cough that just started, or the fever that hit, Coronavirus, or do I just have the common cold or flu?



COMMON COLD

INCUBATION PERIOD:

1-3 days

SYMPTOMS ONSET:

Gradual

ILLNESS RECOVERY:

1 week for most cases;
may last 10 days

SYMPTOMS

- RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE
- SNEEZING
- SORE THROAT



INFLUENZA (FLU)

INCUBATION PERIOD:

1-4 days

SYMPTOMS ONSET:

Abrupt

ILLNESS RECOVERY:

1 week (mild cases);
2 weeks (severe cases)

SYMPTOMS

- FEVER • DRY COUGH
- MUSCLE ACHE
- FATIGUE • HEADACHE
- SORE THROAT
- RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE



CORONAVIRUS

INCUBATION PERIOD:

1-14 days

SYMPTOMS ONSET:

Sudden

ILLNESS RECOVERY:

2 weeks (mild cases);
2 – 6 weeks (severe cases)

SYMPTOMS

- FEVER
- DRY COUGH
- SHORTNESS OF BREATH
- MUSCLE ACHE
- FATIGUE

These are **COMMON SYMPTOMS**, which may vary from person to person.
Only a doctor can give you a correct diagnosis.

South Africans are recommended to get their flu shot as soon as it is available. It's unclear how much seasonal flu could worsen COVID-19, but **experts want to avoid people having both.**

THE MAJORITY OF THE CORONA INFECTIONS ARE MILD

Seriousness of symptoms



SPREAD THE WORD, NOT THE VIRUS

Here's a few things you can do to help prevent the spread of these diseases:
(also in your own home during lockdown)



SELF-ISOLATE WHEN YOU START FEELING UNDER THE WEATHER.



AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, MOUTH AND NOSE.



DISINFECT DOOR KNOBS; COUNTERTOPS; TOYS; ETC.,



FREQUENTLY WASH YOUR HANDS.

IF EVERYONE WASHED THEIR HANDS THIS WOULD HAPPEN

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DIARRHEAL
DISEASE



16%
REDUCTION OF
RESPIRATORY INFECTION



BUT ONLY **68%** OF WOMEN
AND **38%** OF MEN SAY THEY
WASH THEIR HANDS REGULARLY.



MANAGEMENT OF PAIN IN LABOUR

By Dr Aneeqah Hendricks, an Obstetrician/Gynaecologist practicing at Melomed Tokai.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF METHODS AND TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE THAT WILL HELP YOU TO COPE WITH THE PAIN.

Labour and delivery is a time of intense pain, which is often influenced by the psychological, emotional, social, cultural and physiological state of the mother. Multiple methods of alleviating pain during the birthing process are currently available. Whether you choose pharmacological methods such as morphine or an epidural, or non-pharmacological methods (water, hypnotism, acupuncture, acupressure) to make labour easier, be prepared for some degree of pain or discomfort.

Maternal physiological responses to labour pain may influence maternal and foetal well-being and labour progress. Pain, stress and anxiety cause release of stress hormones such as cortisol and endorphins.

The sympathetic nervous system response to pain leads to a marked increase in circulating catecholamines that can adversely affect uterine activity and uteroplacental blood flow.

Effective pain management attenuates or eliminates these responses.

PHARMACOLOGICAL (MEDICATION)

Many women end up relying on some type of method to reduce the physical pain of childbirth. As you prepare for labour, it is important to become familiar with the pain medications that are available, how they work, their risks and their benefits. Most commonly used are Entonox (gas), opiates (Morphine and Pethidine) and epidural.

The Pros and Cons of using pain-relieving drugs in labour:

ENTONOX

Pros

- + It works quickly
- + It leaves the system quickly
- + Self administered, more control for patient
- + Helps focus the breathing
- + No known side effects to the fetus
- + Can be used at home or in the birth pool

Cons

- + Can make you feel nauseous
- + Can make you feel dizzy, 'not with it' and out of control
- + Long term effects on baby unknown

PETHIDINE, MORPHINE

Pros

- + Acts as a sedative, relaxes and calms
- + Takes the edge off the pain
- + Works quickly
- + Can help you rest, best given in early labour

Cons

- + Can cause nausea and vomiting
- + Mobility may be reduced therefore can slow labour
- + Interferes with endorphin production
Increased risk of intervention
Interferes with prolactin (milk production hormone)
Crosses through to the baby and if given too close to birth can affect baby's breathing and sucking.

EPIDURAL

Pros

- + Provides total pain relief when effective
- + Does not cause drowsiness
- + Lowers blood pressure

Cons

- + Reduced mobility
- + You will need an IV line
- + Can slow labour
- + Increased risk of intervention and instrumental delivery
- + Will need a urinary catheter
- + Can cause itching and severe headache

NON-PHARMACOLOGICAL

HYPNOSIS:

With a little practice throughout pregnancy, **women can learn the process of becoming deeply relaxed and free of fear so the uterine muscles can work with minimal pain.**

ACUPUNCTURE:

Acupuncture/acupressure **involves applying pressure to specific points in the body to provide pain relief and encourage an efficient labour.** TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) provides relief for the first stage of labour (25-60% effective). Also good for backache. Machines can be bought or hired.

THERAPEUTIC TOUCH OR MASSAGE:

The purpose of therapeutic touch in labour is to communicate caring and reassurance. Painful contractions of the uterus can be treated by the

application of pressure with the hands to the woman's back, abdomen, hips, thighs, sacrum or perineum.

Anxiety is reported to be reduced in patients who receive reassuring touch. In a retrospective study of 30 patients, 77% experienced 'less pain' when they were touched during labour, and 40% reported less need for pain medication.

MOVEMENT:

Whatever feels comfortable e.g bouncing gently on a Pilates ball.

HEAT:

Sitting in warm bath.

DOULAS:

A doula is a professional trained in childbirth that provides emotional, physical, and educational support to a mother who is expecting, is experiencing labor, or has recently given birth.

The doula's purpose is to help women have a safe, memorable, and empowering birthing experience.

Doulas do not provide any type of medical care. However, they are knowledgeable in many medical aspects of labor and delivery. As such, **they can help their clients gain a better understanding of the procedures and possible complications in late pregnancy or delivery.**

During delivery, doulas are in constant and close proximity to the mother. ➤

They have the ability to provide comfort with pain relief techniques including breathing techniques, relaxation techniques, massage, and laboring positions.

Doulas also encourage participation from the partner and offer reassurance.

After the birth, many labor doulas will spend time helping mothers begin the breastfeeding process and encouraging bonding between the new baby and other family members.

*Please note: Different rules might be applied at hospital labour wards during the COVID-19 pandemic.



CONCLUSION

Write down your wishes in your birth plan, but remember that you should keep an open mind. **You may find that you want more pain relief than you'd planned, or your doctor or midwife may suggest more effective pain relief to help the delivery.**

Ask your midwife or doctor to explain what's available so that you can decide what's best for you. Whether or not you decide to use pain relief during labour, there are a number of techniques that will help you be more relaxed, which can help you to cope with the pain. ■

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* Nielsen SO Value Share, 12mm'19

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NEW BABY FAQ

Dr Mugammad Taib Ismail, Paediatrician at Melomed Gatesville, gives some practical answers to the most common concerns that paediatricians hear in the first year.

Before we discuss some of the common questions, it may be important to discuss some basic principles. Physiology, the way in which the body works, anatomy, the way the body's structures are organised, and illness in an adult is not the same as that of a child or a baby.

By enlarge, the treatment and management of illnesses/problems in a baby is very different than the management of an adult. In other words, what works for an adult will not necessarily work for a baby and may in fact be dangerous to the baby.

Below are a few of the common questions that parents ask:

How often should a baby poop? This can vary greatly. Some babies will poo once every 3 days (or twice a week). Other babies will poo 6 times per day. These extremes are completely normal, however, **more than 6 times a day may indicate that there is a problem, e.g. a milk allergy.** Less than once in 3 days may also indicate a problem, e.g. Hirschsprung Disease. Consult with your paediatrician. It is always a good idea to show the paediatrician what the poo looks like.

It may be convenient to take a picture of the soiled diaper to show your paediatrician.

What colour should the poop be? In the first few days after birth the poop will be black. This usually lasts for 2-3days. Thereafter, the poo should be yellow, green, mustard, light brown, dark brown. Red poo might indicate blood while white poo may indicate a liver problem. **If the poo is red or white, see your paediatrician.**

What can I use for colic? Colic is characterised by a fussy baby or crying for long periods of time, lasting about 3 hours.

These crying episodes are usually predictable, happening at the same time every day (typically in the early morning).

It will usually last for 3 months and there is no proven cause for colic. Between the episodes of crying, baby will look and feed well. No medication has been proven to consistently help with colic. Probiotics e.g. Reuterina; colix, lactose enzymes (digests milk e.g. Colix) and Telament colic drops, are good, safe products which, on occasion, will help with colic. Avoid other remedies since it can have serious side effects.

Does applying oil to the scalp help cradle cap? Oil does help, however, it is important to remove it 30 minutes after applying it. If it is left for longer it will dry and block off the sweat glands worsening the cradle cap. It may be more convenient to add some oil to the bath water, e.g. adding Bennets bath and massage drops to the bath. This will help to soften the cradle cap. Furthermore, use a gentle shampoo and conditioner e.g. PURE shampoo/PURE conditioner.

When can I start feeding egg/seafood/nuts? It is reasonable to **start the introduction of high risk "allergy" foods after the age of 8 months.**

Starting too late increases the risk of allergies. **Start with the milder allergy foods, for example, start with egg whites, then introduce egg yolk.** Start with hake fish, and eventually build up to shellfish. Nuts are conveniently introduced by giving small amounts of peanut butter.

Does teething cause diarrhoea/fever/cough?

Most babies will teethe over a period of 3 years. **During this time, they are bound to get colds/flu/diarrhoea etc. It is purely a coincidence that they would teethe and get an illness at the same time as they are teething.** Teething does not cause illness nor does illness cause teething.

When should I put my child in a walking ring?

Walking rings often interfere with a baby's development. Balance may become an issue. **From the age of about 7-8 months, most children learn by exploring.** While walking rings allows a child to move around, it limits a child's ability to explore, for example, unpacking a cupboard. It may also cause a delay in walking

as the child is **not given the opportunity to pull him/herself up along the furniture and developing the necessary balance and motor control** in order to walk. The use of walking rings is strongly discouraged.

Should I give my baby water? Breastmilk consists predominantly of water. Our

grandmothers would often give their babies boiled water whilst they did not have enough breastmilk. **By giving breastmilk and/or formula, your baby will be getting enough water.** Additional water bottles will therefore not be necessary.

While in adults water is helpful to alleviate acid reflux and constipation, it must be mentioned that water does not alleviate constipation or acid reflux in babies.

In fact, water can worsen acid reflux in babies and interfere with absorption of nutrients. This is

potentially dangerous to a baby.

When can I start feeding my baby?

Feeding before 4 months is too early. Feeding after 6 months is too late. It may cause >

problems such as allergies and coeliac disease.

The correct time to start feeds is between 4–6 months. Your baby will just about be able to sit. Baby should intentionally try to grab food from your plate and try to eat it. Another sign that baby may be ready is when they lick objects as if they are licking an ice-cream.

When can I start tea? Tea is of no benefit to a child. Many teas are iron chelators, put simply, they draw iron

out of the body. **Iron is important in a child's growth and development.** In adults, tea acts as an appetite stimulant, however in children, tea often suppresses appetite, and can lead to the child being a fussy eater. A good healthy appetite is important in a child's growth and development. **We recommend that no tea be given until at least the age of 5 years.**

When can I start juice? If a baby never drinks juice it will not cause any medical problems. Juice is not an essential part of a baby's diet. **Fresh fruit and**

vegetables are better, tastier and healthier. It can be made into smoothies as well.

How long should I continue pureed foods? A baby should progress from smooth pureed foods to adult-type meals (eg. Lasagne) at the age of 8 months.

This is a quick progression. So, on day 1 it will be smooth foods. On week 2 try to add some texture e.g. mash the veggies with a fork. Gradually increase the texture as baby tolerates. ■



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A man with a beard, wearing a blue t-shirt, is focused on blending ingredients in a clear blender jar. The jar contains sliced cucumbers and green leafy vegetables. He is holding the base of the blender with one hand and the lid with the other. In the background, a kitchen setting is visible with a glass of orange juice and a bowl of green vegetables on the counter.

VEGANISM & DIABETES

BALANCING YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS ON A VEGAN DIET

A vegan diet is a type of a vegetarian diet where you don't eat ANY animal products. This means no fish, eggs, milk, poultry, cheese or any other dairy products. When you have diabetes, a vegan diet may help you to better manage your blood glucose levels.

Upon improvement of your glucose levels you might lose weight with a concomitant reduction in cholesterol, blood pressure and improved insulin sensitivity. A vegan diet comes in handy to reduce blood glucose spikes, given that you adhere to the following:

1. Avoid foods containing refined carbohydrates and sugar like white bread, baked goods, sugary, fizzy drinks and fruit juices as these foods have a high glycaemic index (GI). They might be vegan but they are detrimental to blood glucose control.¹

High GI foods tend to increase blood glucose rapidly. Rather switch to whole grain options and steer away from hot potatoes and hot pasta. Refrigerate potatoes and pasta overnight as cold starches generally have a lower GI.

2. Enjoy a variety of fruit and vegetables. The more colourful your plate the better. Opt for less ripe fruit such as greenish bananas since the sweeter the fruit the larger the effect on your blood glucose.²

3. Be aware that peas, corn, butternut, sweet potato, potatoes and pumpkin are actually starches and not

vegetables. Swap your usual starches such as bread and rice for cold starchy vegetables.³

4. Always eat a mixed meal containing fat, protein and high fibre carbohydrates. Protein and fat both tend to delay gastric emptying and therefore the rate at which carbohydrate is digested and absorbed.⁴

5. Not only are legumes like kidney beans, chickpeas and lentils high in protein but also rich in soluble fibre.

Soluble fibre helps to control your glucose and cholesterol levels and will further increase satiety.⁵

Add them to your favourite tossed salad for extra protein and fibre. They will further provide protein and texture to your baked treats e.g. brownies.

6. Whole strawberries, blueberries and raspberries in general have lower GI's compared to other fruit.²

Berries contain a rich assortment of antioxidants to support your skin, cells and immune system. Blend the berries with your smoothies or use them as a snack, fresh or frozen, between meals. Serving size is around 150 g. >



7. Chia seeds, an ancient grain, has become immensely popular the past few years. Chia is an excellent source of plant protein, soluble fibre, vitamins and minerals. Chia seed oil is also the plant oil richest in plant derived omega-3 fatty acids. Research further indicates that chia seeds have therapeutic effects in terms of improved diabetes control and lower levels of cholesterol and blood pressure.⁶

Soak a quarter of a cup in a cup of soy or almond milk to create a chia pudding which is the perfect breakfast or snack. Add some cinnamon or vanilla and top up with nuts and seeds. To add a little sweetness, round it off with some strawberries or blueberries. Chia seeds can moreover be used to replace egg in your favourite baking recipes.

8. Seeds and nuts are great sources of healthy fats, fibre and protein which all play an important role in delaying gastric emptying with consequently less blood glucose spikes and increased satiety.⁷

Grab a handful of walnuts, almonds or mixed nuts and pair with berries for a filling snack. Don't forget to add some pumpkin, sunflower and linseeds to your breakfast cereal or bran rusks.

JUST AS IMPORTANT AS THE FOOD YOU CONSUME ARE OTHER LIFESTYLE CHOICES LIKE SUFFICIENT SLEEP, ADEQUATE EXERCISE, AND REGULAR MEALS TO HELP CONTROL YOUR GLUCOSE LEVELS.

1. Seven to eight hours of sleep is not only essential for fighting fatigue and counteract mood swings but also

to regulate hormonal regulation and therefore blood glucose control. Research has further linked poor sleeping habits with less favourable diabetes outcomes.⁸

2. The American Diabetes Association⁹ recommends not less than 150 minutes physical activity per week with no more than 2 days to elapse between exercise sessions. Both aerobic and resistance exercise is essential for optimal blood glucose control and health outcomes.

3. If you don't have diabetes, breakfast skipping can increase your risk to develop type 2 diabetes in the future.¹⁰ Furthermore, several research studies associated breakfast skipping with deleterious effects on blood glucose control and poor diabetes outcomes over the long term.¹¹ ■



1 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30902150> | 2 <https://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/31/12/2281.long> | 3 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16034360> | 4 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16537685> | 5 <http://apjcn.nhri.org.tw/server/APJCN/23/2/210.pdf> | 6 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4926888/pdf/13197_2015_Article_1967.pdf | 7 <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/epub/10.1161/CIRCRESA-HA.118.314316> | 8 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32006640> | 9 <https://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/39/11/2065> | 10 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25686619> | 11 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0899900719302229?via%3Dihub>



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WHY ANTENATAL CARE IS ESSENTIAL

KEEP YOUR BABY HEALTHY AND YOUR BODY HAPPY DURING PREGNANCY

By Dr Siyanda Zulu, an Obstetrician/Gynaecologist practicing at Melomed Richards Bay.

WHAT IS ANTENATAL CARE?

Antenatal care, also known as prenatal care or childbirth education, is health care that is offered to pregnant women throughout pregnancy until her baby is born. It is designed to prepare expecting moms for labour and birth as well as the first few weeks with the newborn baby.

At its core the goal is to improve the health of pregnant women and to reduce the risk of stillbirths, childbirth complications and newborn deaths. Maternity care as a whole is delivered by a team of professionals which include midwives, general practitioners and obstetricians.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ANTENATAL CARE

Antenatal care is beneficial for both mother and child. Although you may be feeling well, it is still important to go for all your antenatal check ups. In developing countries, particularly South Africa,

death of pregnant women and children remains a major health challenge and is unacceptable high compared to first world countries. Having regular check ups during your pregnancy is an important part of staying healthy and making sure your baby is healthy.

During antenatal visits you will be provided with information on topics like pregnancy, childbirth, birthing options, breastfeeding and motherhood. It also provides an opportunity for expecting parents to ask any questions or concerns they might have regarding pregnancy and what to expect, and also to offer support and guidance.

BENEFITS OF ANTENATAL CLASSES

- Connecting with other expecting parents
- Feeling prepared for labour and childbirth
- Getting your partner involved
- Antenatal classes remove the fear of the unknown. They

give expecting parents a good idea of what to expect and how to prepare for it.

WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED DURING ANTENATAL CLASSES?

- How to prepare for labour
- Induction of labour
- Signs and symptoms of labour
- The stages and process of labour, birth and delivery
- When to call the hospital, and what to expect when you arrive
- Positions to try during labour
- Breathing techniques to use during labour
- Labour pains and pain relief options
- Potential complications in labour
- Early days with baby

WHAT ABOUT PARTNERS, DADS-TO-BE?

The support of a loving partner cannot be over emphasised during the experience of this wonderful milestone in a women's life. Antenatal care also provides education and support to expectant fathers

on what they can do to help. Taking a class with your partner is a good way for them also to feel more included in the process, and not feel left out.

WHEN TO SEE YOUR DOCTOR

It is a good idea to go to your local clinic, hospital or your general practitioner as soon as you suspect you might be pregnant e.g. when you miss your period. Your first antenatal visit should be early (before 12 weeks of pregnancy) or when pregnancy is diagnosed.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING YOUR FIRST ANTENATAL VISIT?

During this visit a range of issues will be discussed, including questions about your health and previous pregnancy outcomes. This will assist the doctor or midwife to plan your care and to identify women who may benefit from additional care.

Your health care provider will check your blood pressure, weight and height, and a pap smear will be done if you haven't had one done in the past two years. Other tests include blood tests and urine tests. An ultrasound scan to confirm a viable pregnancy and to correctly date the pregnancy will be done.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The follow up visits to your doctor or midwife will be arranged on an individual basis, based on your risk profile. Women who are deemed to be low risk i.e. those with an uncomplicated pregnancy, a minimum of 8 to 10 visits is required.

Low risk women will have their subsequent visit at around

20 weeks. Thereafter, every 4 weeks until later in the pregnancy, when visits will be more regular.

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE REGARDING ANTENATAL CARE CLASSES

Recent evidence has shown that regular antenatal care visits with a health care provider is associated with better pregnancy outcome and a positive pregnancy experience.

This is because of the increased opportunity to detect and manage potential complications.

ANTENATAL CARE RECOMMENDATIONS

- A minimum of 8 to 10 visits
- Healthy eating and nutrition and keeping physically active during pregnancy
- Daily oral iron, folic acid and calcium supplementation
- One ultrasound scan before 24 weeks gestation (early ultrasound) to estimate gestational age, detect any abnormalities with your unborn baby, and check if you might be carrying multiple pregnancy like twins

or triplets

- Smoking and excess alcohol not recommended as these may adversely affect pregnancy
- Physically demanding work and prolonged standing is associated with poor pregnancy outcomes like preterm birth and growth restriction. Pregnant women and their employers should assess the significance of this risk and adjust exposure accordingly

MORE INFORMATION

MomConnect is a South African Department of Health initiative to support pregnant women through the use of cell phones where they can register their pregnancy and get more information as well as access to a helpdesk for patient queries and feedback

Melomed Private hospital Richards Bay- Melobabes Maternity Programme supports expectant mothers by providing free antenatal classes and birth registration.

Contact us at info@melomed.co.za

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Let's play, learn and grow together



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus: A daily routine to play, learn and grow

Plan your day with **routines** and **special times**

Message to parents and caregivers of children from birth to five years




Many parents and other caregivers now have to take care of their young children all day at home due to the closure of ECD centres and playgroups as part of the measures that Government put in place to combat the **COVID-19** coronavirus. No one could foresee this. In the next couple of weeks, the Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education, UNICEF and other partners will work together to provide you with basic information and tools to *support your child's early learning and development at home*. These are based on existing programmes.

LET'S START WITH THE BASICS

Though you did not plan to have your child at home, this is a **good opportunity** to support your child's learning and development. Try to include your child's learning and development into your daily routines.

This is also a good time to bond with your child while he or she is playing and learning, but **routines** help young children to feel safe in a time where everybody else worries.

Basic routine to follow every day

Mornings	Afternoons	Evenings
<p>WAKE-UP TIME Keep the wake-up routine in the mornings the same. Eat breakfast. Wash. Brush teeth. Get dressed for the day. During this time talk to your child (if old enough) about the plans for the day.</p> <p>GET ACTIVE Go outside (if possible) and do some playful physical activities. It can be anything. Walk short distance. Play with a ball. As long as the body moves.</p> <p>LEARNING TOGETHER Use this time to do a playful learning activity with your child (<i>we will share ideas during the weeks to come</i>). During this time you will guide your child to do something interesting in a playful manner. For example, take an old magazine or even an advertising brochure from a big shop. Go through it page by page and ask your child to identify certain things. For example, everything that is red, or every shape that is a circle. You need to adapt this according to his or her age.</p> <p>FREE PLAY Allow your child some time for free play. This means that he or she does (play) what he or she wants without your guidance. But keep an eye on your child to make sure that he or she is safe.</p> <p>STORY TIME Make time to read with your child or tell a story. Young children love stories, and it also helps them to learn new words and understand the world around them. Plan about 15 minutes for this. While reading the book or telling the story, allow your child to ask questions. You can also ask your child questions (not like a test).</p> 	<p>LUNCH TIME Eat together. Talk about healthy food. If your child is old enough, you may ask him or her to help you preparing lunch. You can also make this a playful learning activity. For example, ask <i>'what is the colour of the tomato?'</i> or <i>'what is the shape of the apple'</i>. Or ask your child to count with you how many spoons of oil you put into a pot... one-two-three!</p> <p>NAP TIME If your child is used to taking a nap after lunch - continue with this routine.</p> <p>LEARNING TOGETHER Use this time to do another playful learning activity with your child. During this time, guide your child to do something interesting in a playful manner. If you focused in the morning on shapes, try to focus in the afternoon on something else, for example the colour yellow. Or go outside to discover how different plants smell or feel like.</p> <p>FREE PLAY Allow your child some time for free play. This means that he or she does (play) what he or she wants to without your guidance. But keep an eye on your child to make sure that he or she is safe.</p>	<p>SUPPER TIME Eat together. Eat together. (see lunch time. You can do the same type of activities)</p> <p>TOGETHER TIME Everyone in the household is most likely at home during this time. Spend time with your young child, together with the rest of the family. Talk about the day. Other family members are encouraged to ask the young child what he or she did during the day.</p> <p>BEDTIME Get ready for bed in the same way as you have always done with your young child. It is also a good time to talk together about the day. Ask your child what he or she thinks you should do together the next day. Tell your child a story that will ease him or her into sleeping.</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">Plan the early learning activities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plan about 10 to 15 minutes for this.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Remember your child's age when doing an activity. He or she cannot concentrate for too long. Rather do less at a time, not more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Always keep it playful... this is how young children learn.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">HEALTHY HABITS</p> <p>Teach your child how to wash his or her hands with soap and running water for 20 seconds. It is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and viruses.</p> <p> The easiest way to know how long 20 seconds are, is to sing 'happy birthday' two times or to sing the first verse of our national anthem, Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika.</p>		

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Let's play, learn and grow together



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus: Shapes around us

Let's look at **circles** and shapes that are **round**

Why young children need to learn about shapes

SHAPES are everywhere! Learning about shapes is important for your child's early learning and development. Learning about different shapes forms the foundation of children's future learning. It is the first step to be able to understand and recognise numbers and letters by their shapes later. It helps children to identify differences while they learn to identify the features of each shape. It also builds their vocabulary.

(These are just some of the many reasons why shapes are important).



ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

In this activity you and your young child will look at the **circle** or shapes that are **round**. There are circles and other round objects everywhere! You can do this with your child many times and everywhere.

You need: You do not have to buy or collect anything to do this activity.

Ages: You can do this activity with most children in this age group. However, you will need to adjust it according to your child's age and ability.



Younger than 18 months

Point at an object in the house that represents a **circle** (for example a plate, a ball, an orange) and use the word **round** or **circle**.

Repeat often with the same (round) objects.

These activities are for ALL children, including children with disabilities

18 months to 36 months

Adjust these to the age of your child

Show the **circle** above and talk about the examples of **round objects** below the circle.

Ask your child to identify other objects in the house or the garden or sky (like the sun) that are also **round**.

Or **page through a magazine** or brochure together and discover everything that is round. Let the child mark it (if it is in a magazine or brochure that you can throw away).

3 to 5 years

The same activities as on the left can be done.

You can also ask them to walk on their own through the kitchen (or any other room) to see how many objects they can find that are **round**.

Or they can **cut out pictures** that are round from a magazine or brochure.

MORE FUN AND LEARNING WITH ROUND OBJECTS

DRAW A CIRCLE

Let your child **draw** a circle (don't worry if it does not look perfect) on a paper or in sand.

Ask him or her to draw a **face inside the circle** that shows how he or she feels. Then **talk** about the feeling(s) that he or she has drawn.

THE CIRCLE TREASURE HUNT

Create a treasure hunt for children to **find** a certain number of hidden objects that are round in one room.

Give **younger children** a lesser number (for example 3) than older children. Remember to make sure that the number of round objects to be found should not be more than what a child is able to count at his or her age.

Praise your child for every round object found. **Talk about** the object and what the purpose of the round object is, for example, *"the plate is round and we eat our food from the plate"*.

Repeat these activities often. You can create many other activities about circles and shapes that are round.

Remember to keep it PLAYFUL and FUN. That is how young children learn.

HEALTHY HABITS

Teach your child how to wash his or her hands with soap and running water for 20 seconds. It is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and viruses.

PASTA WITH TUNA AND PEAS



INGREDIENTS

- 250 g elbow noodles
- 1 tsp (5 ml) salt
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) sunflower oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, seeds removed and chopped
- 1 tsp (5 ml) curry powder
- 2 x 170 g tins tuna in brine, drained
- 1 x 410 g tin cream style sweetcorn
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) low-fat or fat-free milk
- 1 cup (250 ml) frozen peas, rinsed
- lemon juice and black pepper to taste

METHOD

1. Bring a large pot of water to the boil. Add pasta and 1/2 tsp of the salt. Cook until tender and drain well. Stir in 1 tbsp of the oil and keep warm.
2. Preheat oven to 180 °C. Meanwhile, heat rest of the oil in a pot and fry onion and green pepper.
3. Add curry powder and fry for a few minutes.
4. Remove from the heat and stir in remaining ingredients with the rest of the salt.
5. Mix sauce with warm pasta and season with lemon juice and pepper.
6. Spoon into an oven dish and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.



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Easy - peesy banana bread

Overripe bananas?
Get the kids to make banana bread!



INGREDIENTS

2 very ripe peeled and mashed bananas
240g cake flour
60ml milk
½ tsp salt
3,75ml bicarbonate of soda
113g of butter
200ml sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla essence

METHOD

Preheat oven to 180 degrees. Grease baking tin. In a bowl cream together the butter and sugar with an electric mixer. Add one egg at a time to the butter mixture and mix thoroughly, then add the vanilla essence. In a separate bowl sift together the cake flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Add half of the sifted dry ingredients and 30ml of milk to the butter mixture and mix lightly. Add the remaining dry ingredients and 30ml of milk and mix. Add the mashed bananas into the batter until smooth. Pour the batter into the greased baking tin and bake for 45 – 50 minutes.

Leave to cool and enjoy!



Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour

*Variations: you may add nuts or chocolate chips.

Banana and Date Smoothie



SERVES 2

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup dates
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup almonds
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 banana peeled and sliced

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place dates in 4 tbsp of hot water and allow to soften.
2. Place dates, milk, almonds, honey and sliced banana in a blender.
3. Blend until smooth.

Enjoy!

what you should know

CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 AT HOME

**HAS SOMEONE IN YOUR HOME TESTED POSITIVE FOR THE CORONAVIRUS
OR STARTED SHOWING SYMPTOMS? HERE'S HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR LOVED ONE
AND KEEP YOURSELF SAFE ESPECIALLY DURING LOCKDOWN.**

Home treatment is for someone with mild illness or those without symptoms, but with underlying health conditions that may result in the development of severe illness.

First, remember that most people who get sick with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms. Experts say those people should be isolated in-house during lockdown and leave only for medical care.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following guidelines when caring for a person with COVID-19. Along with following these steps, it's important that you have ongoing support and easy access to healthcare services while you are caring for someone at home in case their condition changes.

1. MONITOR SYMPTOMS

If the person's symptoms worsen, call their doctor. Signs that someone may require immediate medical attention include pain or pressure in the chest, shortness of breath ("I can't seem to get enough air"), confusion or turning blue.

2. PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS

Everyone in the household must follow the preventive steps. This includes good hand hygiene, minimum contact (social distancing) and awareness about preventing the infection from spreading to others in the household.

Rule number one: Wash your hands with soap and water before and after any contact with the patient and their direct environment.

If your spouse or roommate is showing

symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19. **First, isolate that person. If you can, put that person in a separate bedroom with a separate bathroom.** Make sure the room is well-ventilated with windows that open. If that's not possible, **limit movement to shared spaces (like the kitchen and bathroom) and keep a distance of at least one metre. Do not share anything, including eating utensils, towels, and linen (or a bed) with the patient.** Have dedicated items for the person receiving care. Wash everything with soap and water before using it again.

Wear a clean new, medical face mask when you are with the patient and follow the guidelines on wearing and discarding a mask. If possible, the person receiving care must also wear a medical face mask to prevent droplets from spreading through the air. You can also wear medical gloves to avoid direct contact with any bodily fluids. Throw these items away and clean your hands thoroughly.

Be extra vigilant about cleaning common surfaces at home, including counters, tabletops and doorknobs. Wash and disinfect surfaces in the room, bathroom, kitchen and the house every day (including bedside tables, frames and other furniture). Wear gloves and protective clothing. You can use regular household soap to clean surfaces and then apply diluted household bleach.

Put clothes and linen into a laundry bag for washing. Use gloves if you're dealing with soiled clothes or bedding. Do not shake it and avoid contact with your skin and clothes. **Use regular washing powder or machine wash at 60 to 90°C with household detergent.** Let the laundry dry thoroughly. >

3. TREAT SYMPTOMS

It's like your mother said: Rest, drink plenty of water to stay hydrated, and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, to help with the symptoms.

4. CHECK YOUR HEALTH

When you've cared for someone at home, you are considered a 'contact'. This means you have to monitor your own health continually. Do this for at least another 14 days from when your

doctor declares the person you cared for healthy.

5. DECIDE WHEN TO END IN-HOUSE ISOLATION

The CDC recommends waiting until the person's fever has subsided for 72 hours (three full days of no fever without the use of fever-reducing medication), other symptoms such as shortness of breath have improved, and at least seven days have passed since their symptoms first appeared. ■

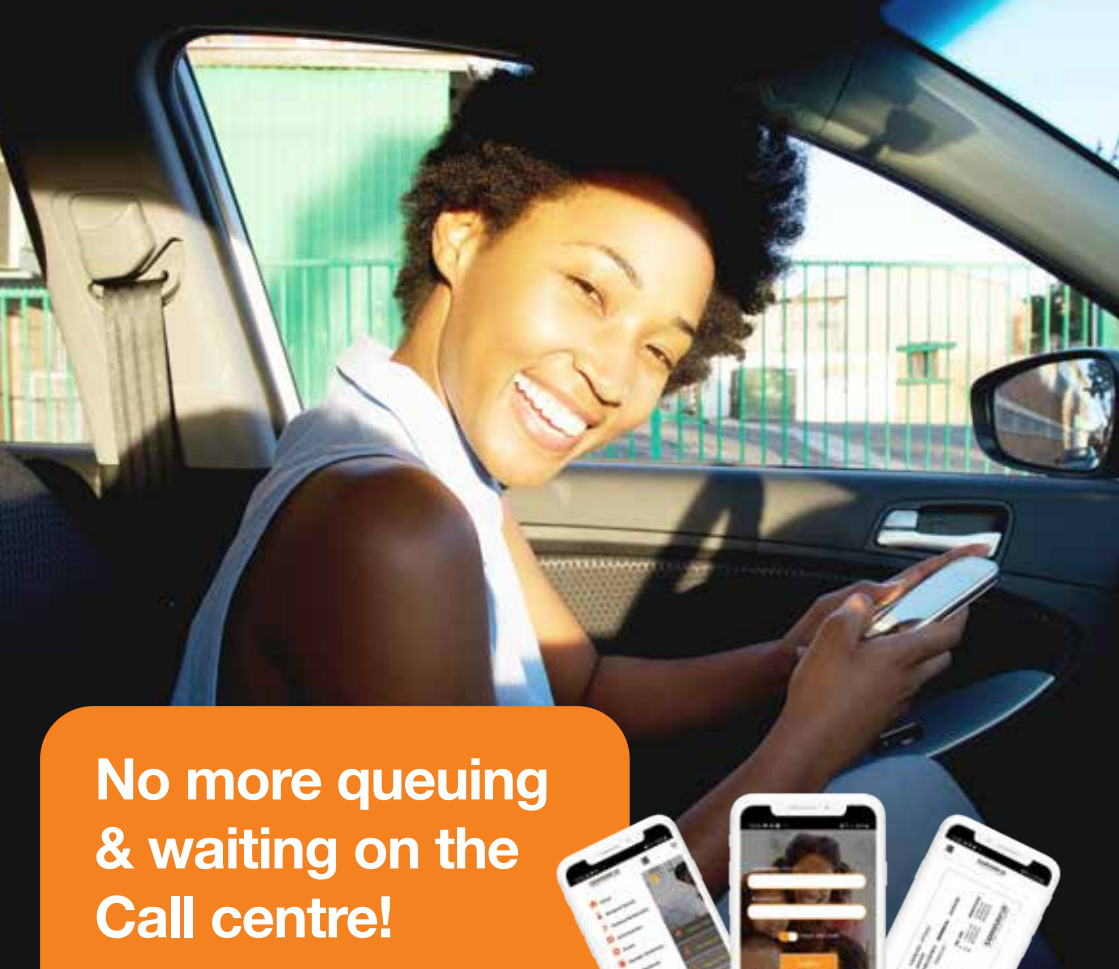
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Discovery at: www.discovery.co.za/corporate/covid19-caring-for-someone-with-covid19-at-home



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WHAT ARE THE **SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS?**

You may not have symptoms when infected. Of symptomatic cases, the majority have mild cold and flu-type symptoms. Symptoms may be fever (usually over 38 degrees Celsius), shivers, muscle aches, coughing, sneezing, or breathing difficulty in more serious cases, and may last for up to two weeks. Severe disease is usually seen in elderly patients, and those with co-existing chronic medical conditions.

HOW DOES THE **VIRUS SPREAD?**

Coronaviruses spread predominantly by respiratory droplets which are breathed or coughed out, usually within a distance of 2 meters, but may also spread via contaminated hands and surfaces.

It may take up to two weeks to develop symptoms, and the virus can be transmitted even before symptoms appear.

OTHER **PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

Masks are useful to limit the spread of infection from people with symptoms, but are not proven to work for the protection of uninfected people such as travellers.

Contact with people should be limited if you are infected or have a high suspicion of having the virus, and should last for 14 days.

PATHCARE DOES TESTING FOR THE CORONAVIRUS

Contact your doctor for a referral

