



A MOTHER'S GUIDE TO LEVEL 2 OF LOCK DOWN

This is a short guide to help mothers in South Africa understand how the move to Level 2 of lock down might affect them.

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HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS

Mothers should continue to attend all antenatal appointments, wearing a mask and keeping physical distancing of 2 metres in public spaces. At this stage most facilities are not allowing partners to accompany you for antenatal visits.

LABOUR AND BIRTH

Good news! Some birth facilities are allowing partners who have been screened for COVID to accompany you in labour. Please check with your birth facility ahead of time to see if they have updated their procedures. Other visitors like family and friends are still not permitted to visit you and your baby in hospital.

VIRUS TRANSMISSION

There is no new information about mother-to-child transmission. Mothers can be reassured that young children who do get infected with COVID-19 tend to have very mild symptoms and recover relatively easily. Babies born prematurely, as well as babies and children with other chronic health issues are at a higher risk of complications if they get the virus so families need to continue to practice physical distancing and COVID hygiene routines. Please refer to our [physical health and child health resources](#) to find out more information.

BREASTFEEDING

There is still no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted through breastmilk, and breastfeeding is the best source of food for a baby and good for protection against many infections. So carry on breastfeeding with confidence that your milk will not infect your baby, even if you get sick. Please refer to our note on [Breastfeeding](#) for more information.

VISITORS

Your family are now allowed to visit you at home; however safety precautions must still be in place as there is still a risk of contracting COVID-19. Guests should wear masks, windows should be open and everyone should do their best to maintain physical distancing. You may still wish to request that family members don't touch or hold your new baby in order to prevent your baby from getting sick.





POST-NATAL SUPPORT AND CLINIC VISITS

The Department of Health is urging all mothers to attend their usual postnatal health visits for themselves and their babies. It is especially important to keep to the immunisation schedule to prevent your child from getting an illness that could be far more harmful for them than COVID-19. When you attend your appointments, wear a mask, keep baby close to you and do not let people, other than the health care provider touch your baby. A reminder that children under two years old should not wear a mask over their face as it can cause them to suffocate.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

If you've been receiving the Child Support Grant for your children, it's important to note that October 2020 is the last month caregivers will receive the top up of R500 per caregiver (regardless of how many children you have). From 1 November, the amount will return to R440 per child per month with no additional caregiver support.

Any other grant you may have received that was increased during COVID-19 will go back to the normal amount from 1 November 2020.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

2020 has been a very tough year, and as we move into the later months, mothers who have been caring for their families may be especially tired, anxious or overwhelmed. Mothers, help is available – please don't feel that you need to suffer alone and in silence. Please refer to [our Mental Health resources](#) for breathing techniques to calm anxiety, information and helplines and safe spaces you can reach out to if you need help.

PARENTING IN THE PANDEMIC

This has been a very difficult year for children and many parents are feeling worried about the impact of the pandemic on their children's emotional, social, physical and mental well-being. We are currently seeing a decline in the number of COVID-19 infections, but many families have been affected and are grieving or in distress. If you are feeling overwhelmed or anxious, or simply wanting some additional support for your parenting journey, please have a look at our [Parenting in the Pandemic](#) resources.

