

Cold Sores



Cold sores are a viral infection that is highly contagious. If a newborn is infected with this virus, there is a small risk of him becoming very ill. In this handout we'll explain more about cold sores and how you can prevent passing the cold sore virus to your baby.

What are Cold Sores?

Cold sores are fluid filled blisters that usually develop on the lips or around the mouth. They are caused by the herpes simplex virus (HSV). Until the cold sores are completely crusted over, HSV can easily be passed from person to person by (in)direct contact with saliva. If passed on to the baby, your baby can potentially become very ill.

Prevent Passing the Cold Sore Virus to Your Baby

Follow the guidelines below to prevent passing HSV to your baby.

When you have cold sores:

- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands, eating and drinking utensils
- Wash your hands thoroughly before touching the baby
- Don't hug or kiss the baby
- Wear a mouth mask when taking care of or feeding your baby

The cold sore virus cannot be passed through breast milk. If you follow the above guidelines, you should be able to continue to breastfeed your baby.

Please be aware that the information provided is intended solely for general educational and informational purposes only. It is neither intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Always seek the advice of your physician for any questions you may have regarding your medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have received in this program.

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