



ITALY-MILAN

**LIFE IS NOW.  
GIVING BIRTH  
DURING  
THE PANDEMIC**

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Buzzi Hospital, mum Serena Minischetti has just given birth to Edoardo. Overcome with emotion, her partner Massimo Paglierucci holds his head in his hands.

## **Managing childbirth amidst fear, loneliness and uncertainty**

At the Vittore Buzzi Hospital Serena gave birth to Edoardo, who weighed in at 3.5 kilos and boasts a long tuft of black hair. The protocol dictates that everyone present has to wear face masks at all times. The baby's father just couldn't contain himself, however, and for a split second lowered his mask and kissed his exhausted wife on the lips under the gaze of the attending midwives. "My son's just been born," says Massimo with tears in his eyes, "and I've got to celebrate in some way." Iaki cried too the other evening when attending the birth at San Raffaele Hospital of his daughter Audrey, and so did Diarti, while watching the screen of a tablet, when on Tuesday he greeted the arrival of his daughter Camilla. At the Humanitas San Pio X Hospital, in fact, fathers are not allowed to attend the birth in person but the hospital provides them with a live stream of the event to watch on a tablet.

Entering the world at the time of coronavirus might be original but it is not the simplest thing in the world. Ilaria, who is seventh months pregnant, explains, "You hope to give birth surrounded by the love of family and friends and instead you find yourself alone with your partner surrounded by fear and insecurities. The fear of contagion, the limitations of the medical check ups, and not being able to attend the antenatal classes."

The words of the doctors, however, are reassuring: there is no evidence of mother to child transmission during childbirth. This doesn't change the fact that the pre triage procedures, with different pathways for infected mothers, involve obligatory protective clothing and solitude, turning the experience into an obstacle course. "Giving birth in the time of COVID-19," explains Lavinia, also in her seventh month, "means check ups and classes that get cancelled, ever-changing hospital protocols, and managing the emergency in the absence of friends and family." But as Wislawa Szymborska wrote, "You're here, so you have to go through it, you will go through it, and therein lies the beauty".



Buzzi Hospital, new mum Marianna Baldini, her partner Manuel Cominotto, and their son Edoardo, born six days earlier, arrive at the hospital for tests.



Buzzi Hospital, a check up on Edoardo Cominotto, son of Marianna Baldini and Manuel Cominotto.



Buzzi hospital, new mum Marianna Baldini breastfeeds in a clinic during a routine check up of her son Edoardo, born six days earlier.



Humanitas San Pio X Hospital, Diarti Mane, originally from Albania, uses a tablet provided by the hospital to watch his wife Luna Melchiorri give birth to their daughter Camilla. In the time of coronavirus, some hospitals do not allow fathers to attend the birth in person.



San Raffaele Hospital, model Anne Christensen has just given birth to her daughter Audrey. With her are the midwife, her partner Iaki Calcagnile, a cook, and Dr. Massimo Candiani, Head of the Gynecology and Obstetrics ward (right).



Ilaria Granata, a bartender in the seventh month of her pregnancy, does the shopping at the supermarket together with her partner Luca Maccagnani, a project manager.



Buzzi hospital, new mum Marianna Baldini (right) waits for the midwives to complete a check on Edoardo, who was born six days earlier.



Buzzi Hospital, mum-to-be Serena Minischetti talks to her partner Massimo Paglierucci while the Head of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dr. Irene Cetin (right) enters the room.



Via Dei Sagredo (behind the San Siro stadium), a children's playground lies empty in the time of coronavirus.



San Raffaele Hospital, the midwife passes newborn baby Audrey into the arms of her mother, model Anne Christensen, watching on is Anne's partner Iaki Calcagnile, a cook.



Pregnant journalist Lavinia Farnese in Piazza Gae Aulenti with her partner Erika Brenna, after having had a blood test at the Centro Diagnostico Italiano.



Mangiagalli Hospital, a baby under observation on the postnatal ward.



Buzzi Hospital, two midwives with mum-to-be Serena Minischetti, ahead of the birth of her son Edoardo. The transparent visors covering the faces of the midwives are a protective measure to prevent the spread of coronavirus.



Paola Mirra is seven months pregnant and is expecting a baby girl, Bianca. Together with her partner Andrea Calicchio, she chooses an artwork to hang from the wall.



Buzzi Hospital, mum-to-be Serena Minischetti takes the lift to go to give birth.



In the garden of her apartment building Federica Negri, a businesswoman who owns a bar in Milan's Navigli district (the Twist on Classic Bar), breastfeeds two-month-old Milo while her four-year-old daughter Ginevra hugs her from behind.



Humanitas San Pio X Hospital, Dr. Alessandro Bulfoni, Head of Obstetrics and Gynecology, performs an ultrasound examination on journalist Stefania Cattaneo, who is 9 months pregnant with Leonardo Enrico.



San Raffaele Hospital, a midwife takes a break at dawn after working through the night. In the time of coronavirus it is obligatory to wear a face mask.



Buzzi Hospital, surgeon Stefano Faiola prepares to perform a caesarian section.

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**BENVENUTO AL PUBBLICO**

**EMERGENZA COVID-19**

**AVVISO ESERCIZIO COVID-19**

plister



**ARRIGO MINERBI (1881 - 1960)**  
**1931, Maternità**  
In memoria di Luigi Mangiapani (1885-1938),  
fondatore dell'Istituto Cattolico Ginecologico nel 1906

