

# Maternity Care during the Coronavirus outbreak

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This leaflet provides you with information regarding your maternity care during the Coronavirus outbreak.

We understand that you will be worried about what Coronavirus means for you and your baby and we are doing all we can to keep you safe.

For general and regularly updated information we recommend you visit:

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy>

**Stay at home if you have a high temperature, a new persistent cough or a new loss of smell/taste and follow guidance available at:**

<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

**Only call 111 if you are not able to access the advice online**

Being pregnant does not increase your risk of becoming seriously unwell from Coronavirus. It is expected that the majority of women who are exposed to the Coronavirus will experience only mild or moderate flu like symptoms.

### **Please follow the Government advice:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

### **Stay alert and stay safe:**

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Minimise contact with others outside of your household
- Stay **two metres (3 steps)** away from anyone you do not live with when outside your home.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Wear something that covers your nose and mouth when it's hard to stay away from people, such as in shops or on public transport

If you are more than 28 weeks' pregnant you should be especially careful to follow social distancing.

If you work in an essential service, as deemed by the Government, and you are less than 28 weeks pregnant, seek advice from your employer.

## **Women in higher risk groups**

Research in the UK has shown that women from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are more likely than other pregnant women to be admitted to hospital for Coronavirus.

Pregnant women over the age of 35, those who have a BMI of 30 or more, and those women who have pre-existing medical problems, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, also appear to be at higher risk of developing severe illness.

Your maternity team may offer you extra appointments or refer you to a specialist clinic if you are in the higher risk group.

It is important that you seek medical help if you have symptoms of Coronavirus or you feel your symptoms are getting worse or you are not getting better.

All pregnant women should take a vitamin D supplement. Women from a BAME background may have an increased risk of low levels of Vitamin D and should take a higher dose. Speak to your Community Midwife or maternity team for further information.

## **Coronavirus Vaccination**

The government has advised that pregnant women should be offered the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as the rest of the population, based on their age and clinical risk group.

It is your choice whether to get the vaccine or not. Please speak to your hospital doctor, GP or midwife for further advice before booking an appointment.

The vaccine will be given at one of the national vaccination centres.

## **Community Midwifery Appointments**

Booking appointments will be undertaken face to face with only the midwife and yourself. During this appointment the midwife will take lots of information and provide advice and guidance. She will also discuss screening tests for you and your baby, and ask for your consent for the ones you choose.

In addition the midwife will take your blood pressure; collect a urine sample; take bloods for any screening tests you have requested; take your height and weight and arrange a dating scan.

Please attend alone unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability and need support) or you are a young parent aged less than 18 years.

If you have a face mask please wear it for your appointment. If you do not have a face mask, we will provide one when you arrive.

**If you have a high temperature, a new persistent cough or a new loss of smell / taste please do not attend any appointment.**

**Your 16 week** appointment will be undertaken face to face and this will be arranged by the midwife at the booking appointment.

**If it is your first baby you will have a face to face appointment at 25 weeks.**

**From 28 weeks** onwards your appointments will be face to face.

When you attend your appointment please come alone, at the allotted time. Partners and family members will not be allowed to enter the building unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability and need support) or you are a young parent aged less than 18 years.

We also ask that you wear a face mask if you have one, if not this can be supplied for you.

## **Hospital Appointments**

If you are asked to attend the hospital antenatal clinic you can bring one nominated adult with you.

Please do not bring any children with you.

If you have a face mask please wear it for your appointment. If you do not have a face mask, we will provide one when you arrive.

All women and their nominated partner will be required to take a lateral flow COVID-19 test on entering the unit, and must abide by the infection prevention procedures in place.

## Scans

If you have a scan appointment, you can bring one nominated adult with you.

Please do not bring any children with you.

All women and their nominated partner will be required to take a lateral flow COVID-19 test on entering the unit, and must abide by the infection prevention procedures in place.

If you have a face mask please wear it for your appointment. If you do not have a face mask, we will provide one when you arrive.

## Urgent care

If your baby's pattern of movements changes or reduces in number, it is important that you **always** call and speak to a Midwife promptly. Please do not wait until the next day.

Maternity Triage: 0151 290 4489

If you are advised to attend the Maternity Triage department or Maternity Assessment Centre, you can bring one nominated adult with you. Please do not bring any children with you.

All women and their nominated partner will be required to take a lateral flow COVID-19 test on entering the unit, and must abide by the infection prevention procedures in place.

If you have a face mask please wear it for your attendance to Triage. If you do not have a face mask, we will provide one when you arrive.

## Antenatal classes

Following Government advice, we have suspended all group sessions and will not be providing any Delivery Suite tours.

We will be launching some virtual sessions in 2021. Please speak to your midwife for updates. Your midwife will also be able to give you advice during your routine antenatal appointments.

## Care in labour

In labour, when you are ready to come to hospital, please call Maternity Triage in advance.

**Maternity Triage:** 0151 290 4489

The midwife will ask you about your labour and some additional questions about your wellbeing and that of your family.

We will do everything we can to respect your birth choices. We have to limit you to one nominated birth partner.

Please do not bring any children with you.

If you have a face mask please wear it for your attendance to Triage. If you do not have a face mask, we will provide one when you arrive.

All women and their nominated partner will be required to take a lateral flow COVID-19 test on entering the unit, and must abide by the infection prevention procedures in place.

You will be offered a routine swab for Coronavirus even if you do not have any symptoms.

If you have symptoms of or confirmed Coronavirus you will be cared for in isolation with a team who will wear additional protective clothing - including face protection and eye wear.

## **Induction of labour**

If you are booked to come into hospital for induction of labour you will need to follow comprehensive social distancing measures and hand hygiene for a maximum of 14 days prior to your admission.

You will be required to have a routine COVID-19 PCR test on admission.

If you are being induced on the antenatal ward, your nominated birth partner will be able to stay with you during the induction period between 9am and 9pm. If you are transferred to delivery suite outside of these hours your partner will be called to attend the delivery suite.

If you are being induced on the delivery suite your nominated birth partner can remain with you.

All nominated partners will be required to take a lateral flow COVID-19 test on entering the unit, and must abide by the infection prevention procedures in place.

If you have symptoms of or confirmed Coronavirus we may delay your induction until you are well.

If your induction of labour needs to continue you will be cared for in isolation with a team who will wear additional protective clothing - including face protection and eye wear.

## Planned caesarean sections

If you are booked to come into hospital for a planned Caesarean Section you will need to follow comprehensive social distancing and hand hygiene measures for a maximum of 14 days prior to your admission.

Both you and your nominated birthing partner need to have a COVID-19 PCR swab test prior to your admission for your planned Caesarean Section. The swabs will be taken when you attend for your pre-op appointment a few days before your surgery.

Following the test you will need to self-isolate until the day of your admission.

If you have symptoms of or confirmed Coronavirus we may delay your planned caesarean section until you are well.

If your planned caesarean section needs to continue you will be cared for in isolation with a team who will wear additional protective clothing - including face protection and eye wear.

## Birth at home

If you have chosen to birth at home we would like to support your choice as long as you fulfil the following conditions:

- You have an uncomplicated pregnancy
- You and your household do not have symptoms of Coronavirus or are isolating due to a household member having had symptoms
- You have not been previously confirmed or suspected positive for Coronavirus
- You can prepare a separate space for the midwife to put on and take off her protective clothing and have access to a sink
- You do not smoke (we are currently unable to offer a homebirth to women who smoke)
- A full homebirth assessment will be carried out if you request a home birth.

Women who are symptomatic of the Coronavirus are recommended to birth in an Obstetric Unit, where additional monitoring of maternal and baby wellbeing can be facilitated.

## After your baby is born

Once your baby is born and as long as you and your baby are well, we will encourage you, with support, to go home as soon as possible.

Your care will be personalised to your needs and those of your baby.

Baby screening tests will be arranged by your midwife. If you have symptoms of or confirmed Coronavirus you will be cared for in isolation with your baby, and the team will wear additional protective clothing. You will be encouraged and supported to breastfeed.

Should you need to stay in hospital, your partner will not be able to stay with you on the postnatal ward but can visit you at designated times. Please discuss with your midwife when you are admitted to the ward.

## Post-natal care at home

The day after you are discharged from hospital a community midwife will visit you at home. Please prepare for visits to your home by considering the following:

- Plan which room you will take the midwife into
- Wherever possible it should just be you and your baby in the room
- The midwife will require access to handwashing facilities

The midwife may then leave your home and continue the appointment discussion with you by telephone.

## **Your midwife will wear a mask, goggles, gloves and apron when visiting your home.**

You will then receive another home visit 5 days following the birth of your baby where we will offer your baby Newborn Blood Spot Screening tests and also weigh your baby.

An appointment will then be arranged on or around 10 days for the midwife to visit you at home to again weigh your baby. If the midwife feels that you and your baby are well enough they may discharge you from our care. However, please note that you are under the care of the midwife for up to 28 days. Therefore, if you have any concerns up until this point, regardless of whether you have been discharged or not, please get in touch on the number below.



If you are expecting a call or visit from a Community Midwife and have not heard from anyone by 3:00pm, it is important that you call:

Community Midwives Office: 0151 430 1492


If you or anyone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus it is important that you let us know using the numbers provided to you by your Community Midwife.

**\*\*Please note that if you are under the care of Halton then you will only receive a visit at home on day 5 and the other contacts will remain via telephone for the time being.\*\***

### **Registering the birth of your baby**

For details on your local registry office please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-offices>



Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

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[www.sthk.nhs.uk](http://www.sthk.nhs.uk)