



COVID-19 (Coronavirus) & Pregnancy

Current as of: March 26, 2020

Below you will find information about COVID-19 that is specific to those visiting for prenatal appointments, coming in for the birth of their baby, postpartum or who have an infant in the NICU.

General Information

What should I do if I think I may have COVID-19 or have been exposed to the virus?

- Visit the [Ontario Ministry of Health website](http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus) (<http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>) and complete the self-assessment tool prior to calling Telehealth Ontario or visiting your Local COVID-19 Assessment Centre.
- **Local COVID-19 Assessment Centres** are intended to educate & provide medical guidance. Find more information about these centres here: www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-health-advice/covid-19-assessment-centres/
- **Toronto Public Health Hotline** should be contacted for questions about COVID-19
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Telephone: 416-338-7600
TTY: 416-392-0658
Email: PublicHealth@toronto.ca
- **Telehealth Ontario** should be contacted if you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms
Telephone: 1-866-797-0000
TTY: 1-866-797-0007

How will I be tested?

A nasal swab will be done and if you are positive, you will receive further direction from your local public health unit.

What should I do if I test positive for COVID-19?

Contact your physician or midwife so they are aware of your diagnosis.

What effect does COVID-19 have on pregnant women?

Based on the information we know to date:

- Pregnant women are **NOT** more likely than the general population to get COVID-19.
- Pregnant women are **NOT** more likely to get severely sick if they get COVID-19.
- It is expected most pregnant women will experience only mild or moderate cold/flu-like symptoms.

How can I reduce my risk of getting COVID-19?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry with a paper towel or reusable dry and clean towel.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer as an alternative.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with dirty hands.

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow.

Hospital Visitor Restrictions

What are the visiting restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Please note that our visiting policies are subject to change at any time. We will endeavor to keep you informed and rest assured your health care team will take good care of you and your baby.

- Unfortunately, during this time of uncertainty there are **NO visitors (some exceptions apply)**.
- **NO children** under **16 years** of age will be permitted unless they are the patient.
- **NO visitors to the antepartum or hospitality ward (some exceptions apply)**.
- **NO visitors to the ambulatory clinic (some exceptions apply)**.

If I am COVID-19 positive or have symptoms, can I have a support person/partner during labour?

If you are COVID-19 positive, or have symptoms, a support person/partner will not be permitted to enter the hospital. We will ensure you receive exceptional support and care during your stay with us and will provide further details on admission.

Please be honest with us about your COVID-19 status so that we can safely prepare for the birth of your baby.

If I do not have COVID-19, can I have a support person/partner during labour?

Women's and Infants' does view birth as a major life event and **at this time** we are allowing the following exceptions:

- **ONE** support person is permitted per day during the your stay, who is **NOT** symptomatic and **NOT** COVID-19 positive. This also means the partner/support person **must not have been in isolation with a COVID-19 person, or have any symptoms** (a fever and/or cough, runny nose, sore throat, or any other respiratory symptoms).
 - The **ONE** support person must remain in the patient's room and maintain social distancing, for the entire duration.
 - The **ONE SAME** support person is allowed one entry and one exit per day and will be rescreened upon entry. While the support person is in the hospital, in and out privileges are not possible (some exceptions may apply). Please ask your nurse for direction and bring anything you may need during your stay which includes food, reading materials, additional clothes, phone charger, etc.

What is the visiting policy in the NICU?

For those visiting their infant in the NICU, we can only permit **ONE parent or alternate caregiver** into the NICU every 24 hours - that is one person at the bedside at one time. The visiting parent will not have in and out privileges.



- The **ONE** parent/alternate caregiver **MUST NOT be COVID-19 positive or have any symptoms** (a fever and/or cough, runny nose, sore throat, or any other respiratory symptoms).
 - When mom delivers a baby and both parents are still in the hospital, parents are allowed to alternate (one parent at a time) for the duration of mom's stay.

We recognize how stressful this can be for new parents, and we will maintain frequent communication with you if you are not permitted to visit.

Prenatal Information

Can I still attend my antenatal (prenatal) appointments?

- You will be contacted the day before your appointment, screened over the phone, and given direction at that time.
- Regardless of whether you have symptoms, it is possible you will have fewer appointments, and that you may have a remote appointment scheduled via teleconferencing.
- You will also be screened at the entrance to the outpatient clinic offices at 700 University Ave.
- You can be assured that each pregnancy will be reviewed individually and that the safety of all of our patients is our priority.
- At this time, **no one** can accompany you during your appointment visit. The size of our waiting areas make social distancing challenging.
 - If you require a support person, they will be asked to wait in their car or go home and come back. They will be contacted by cell phone during your appointment if needed.
 - If you need your support person to help with accessibility, it **MUST** be approved by your doctor in advance.
- **NO children under 16 years** of age will be permitted unless they are the patient.
- **If you are having a fetal procedure**, you are permitted **ONE support person** who does **NOT** have symptoms and is **NOT positive** for COVID-19.
- Staff will speak to your doctor for extenuating circumstances related to your reason for visiting.

What effect will COVID-19 have on my baby if I am diagnosed?

Based on the information we know to date:

- Based on information we have from other respiratory viral infections (influenza, SARS, MERS), there may be an association with low-birth weight babies & preterm birth, which may be due to severe maternal illness.
- As a precaution, patients who have been diagnosed and have safely recovered from COVID-19 will have an ultrasound to assess fetal growth and wellbeing.

Birthing and Postpartum Information

What happens when I come into the hospital for any obstetrical care?

- When entering the main hospital at 600 University Avenue, and then again when you arrive on the 15th floor, you will be screened for symptoms.



- If you are coming for a **booked procedure**, such as a Cesarean Section, you will receive a prescreening phone call and further directions.
- If you are arriving in **labour**, or have **concerns such as bleeding or reduced fetal movement**, you will also be screened at the hospital entrance and then proceed directly to triage on the 15th floor.
- If you have symptoms of, or are confirmed for COVID-19:
 - You will be asked to wash your hands and put on a mask. Your partner will not be permitted into the hospital, you will be directed to the appropriate location for further assessment.
 - You will need to have a nasal swab done.
 - Your booked procedure will **NOT** be cancelled but delayed until we have the test result so that we can care for you safely.
 - Your care giving team will wear gloves, gowns and face masks while providing your care.

How will my baby be cared for in the hospital if I have suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

- Your baby will be tested during your stay using a nasal swab, umbilical cord blood and placental swab.
- If you are well, your baby will stay in the room in with you.
- Ensure you wash your hands frequently, but also before and after touching your baby.
- You will also be asked to wear a mask for all infant contact.
- If you are unwell, and unable to care for your baby, your baby may be cared for in your room by your support person or may be admitted to the NICU for care, as per the discussion with the paediatric team.
- If your baby is admitted to the NICU and you are COVID-19 positive, you and your partner will not be allowed to enter the NICU, in an effort to protect your baby as well as the other infants there.

Can I breastfeed and do “skin to skin” with my baby if I am COVID-19 positive?

- Keeping your baby “skin to skin” and breastfeeding is encouraged, but you will be asked to wear a mask at these times and during any infant care activities.
- If expressing breast milk with a manual or electric breast pump, you should wash your hands before touching any pump or bottle parts and follow recommendations for proper pump cleaning after each use.
 - If possible, consider having someone who is well, care for and feed the expressed breast milk to the infant.

Going home with your baby

Ensure you have arranged a doctor’s appointment close to home for your baby after discharge. All newborns must be seen within 1-3 days after discharge.

- Our Postnatal Ambulatory Clinic (PNAC) is now located on the 20th floor at Mount Sinai Hospital and is for essential pre-booked visits only. You will be provided with a list of community resources upon discharge. Your health care provider will explain the process for



booking a visit and for passing our hospital entrance screening should you have an essential visit booked, have symptoms, or are COVID-19 positive.

- Family members or friends with any respiratory illness or symptoms should **NOT** visit at your home.
- If there are children at home, instruct them about good hand hygiene and keep sick children away from the baby.
- If your baby becomes sick do **NOT** bring them back to Mount Sinai Hospital, **go to your closest hospital that has paediatric services.**
- Recommendations for the well baby:
 - Rooming in, “skin to skin” contact and breastfeeding as above
 - Hand washing and good hygiene is always recommended for any baby contact
 - A parent who is **positive for COVID-19 or under investigation:**
 - Should put on a clean mask and wash their hands thoroughly before each contact with baby.
 - Bassinette is kept more than 6 feet from mom at other times.

Mount Sinai Hospital services that are limited during this time:

- The food court and Second Cup are open but there is no seating.
- All in-patient and out-patient classes are suspended.
- Our Baby Shop is closed, but you can still shop online at www.sinaishop.ca/collections/baby-and-maternity and have items delivered to your hospital room.
- All ambulatory services, including our Post Natal Ambulatory Clinic and breastfeeding services have been **REDUCED** to prioritize essential services

Resources used to create this brochure

- Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Statement on Coronavirus COVID-19, March 10, 2020 at: www.bfmed.org/abm-statement-coronavirus
- CAPWHN, COVID-19 Suggestions for care of the perinatal population at: <https://capwhn.ca/covid-19-suggestions-for-care/March192020>
- CDC information on COVID-19 and pregnancy, birth, infant care and breastfeeding. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html
- SOGC summary of recommendation on care during pregnancy, birth, postpartum, and care of the newborn <https://sogc.org/en/content/featured-news/Updated-SOGC-Committee-Opinion-%20COVID-19-in-Pregnancy.asp>
- Toronto Region COVID-19 Hospital Operations Table COVID-19 – Recommendations for Management of Pregnant Women and Neonates with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Version Date: March 17, 2020 at: www.pcmch.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Toronto-Region-COVID-19-Management-of-pregnant-women-and-neonates-with-suspected-or-confirmed-COVID-March-17-2020-1.pdf