**COVID-19 (Coronavirus) & Pregnancy**

**General Information**

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

* Complete the self-assessment tool on the **Ontario Ministry of Health website** prior to calling Telehealth or visiting your Local COVID-19 Assessment Centre
  + <http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>
* **Local COVID-19 Assessment Centres** are intended to provide education and medical guidance. To research more about these centres the link is:
  + <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-what-you-should-do/covid-19-have-symptoms-or-been-exposed/covid-19-assessment-centres/>
* **Toronto Public Health Hotline** should be used for questions about COVID-19
  + Hours: 8:30am-8:00pm
  + Telephone: 416-338-7600
  + TTY: 416-392-0658
  + Email: [PublicHealth@toronto.ca](mailto: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 for COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?**

A nasal swab will be done. If positive you will receive direction from your local public health unit.

**What should I do if I test positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?**

Contact your Obstetrician, Family Physician or Midwife so they are aware of your diagnosis.

**What effect does COVID-19 (Coronavirus) 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 that pregnant women will experience mild-moderate cold/flu-like symptoms

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

* **Wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry with a paper towel or reusable dry and clean towel.
* As an alternative, if hands **are not** visibly soiled **alcohol based hand sanitizer** could be used.
* **Avoid touching** your **eyes, nose** and **mouth** with **dirty hands**.
* **Practice Physical Distancing** by avoiding close contact and keep a distance of **6 feet (2 metres)** from one another.

**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 given time**.

We will endeavor to keep you informed and rest assured your health care team will take very good care of you and your baby.

We encourage you to visit our website frequently:

<https://unityhealth.to/patients-and-families/coronavirus-information-for-patients-and-families/>

* Unfortunately during this time of uncertainty there are **NO visitors allowed** in the hospital**. Family Birthing Centre is one of the exceptions at this time.**
* In the **Family Birthing Centre** patients who are admitted for labour/birth are limited to **ONE partner OR coach.** 
  + If you need to be assessed in the Family Birthing Centre triage area or if you have a clinic appointment, your partner/coach is not permitted to be with you. If you need to be admitted for labour/birth, you can call your partner/coach to come and be with you at that time.
  + If you are being induced and have a procedure scheduled in advance of your admission (i.e. Foley insertion), your partner/coach is not permitted to be with you. When you are admitted for your induction, your partner/coach can be with you at that time.
* Patients under the age of 16 (i.e. if your baby needs to be admitted to NICU or pediatrics) – limited to **ONE designated parent or guardian.**

\***Important:**

* Any family/support person allowed into the Family Birthing Centre **must pass screening criteria** to be allowed in the hospital.
* This means they must not possess any of the following:
  + Runny nose
  + Fever
  + Cough
  + Sore throat
  + Shortness of breath
  + Travel outside of Canada in the last 14 days
* **Please note:** we are NOT permitting any in-person family visits for patients who are **COVID-19 positive or a Person Under Investigation (PUI)** even if they meet the above criteria.
  + **Why?** We recognize this may be distressing for patients and family. This difficult decision was made out of necessity to limit the transmission of the virus and protect our patients, families, staff and physicians.

**What are the Expectations of Inpatients?**

To keep all patients, staff and physicians safe we ask all patients/support persons in the Family Birthing Centre to:

* Remain on the unit and **do not** wander around the hospital. If your support person needs to leave the hospital, they will not be allowed to return to the unit until the next day.
* Refrain from going to the cafeteria or other public areas. Your support person should pack enough food for their stay and bring in their own cooler if required, as communal patient fridges on the unit are off limits at this time.
* For patients who must leave to smoke please remember the importance of keeping physical distancing and not visiting with family or friends outside.

**Prenatal Classes**

* Prenatal classes are unfortunately suspended at this time
* For more information please contact Laura Samaras at 416-530-6191
* Expectant parents may be interested to check out a free 4-class prenatal webinar series at the following link:
  + <https://markhamprenatal.com>

**Birthing Information**

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

* When entering the Our Lady of Mercy Wing at St. Joseph’s Health Centre (100 Sunnyside Avenue) on the **1st floor** you and your support person will be screened for symptoms.
* After screening, you will proceed to the Family Birthing Centre Triage area.

**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 and you will be directed to the appropriate location for further assessment.
* You will need to have a nasal swab done.
* Your care team will be wearing gloves, gown and face mask while providing your care.

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

* If you have confirmed COVID-19, your baby will be tested using a nasal swab.
* If you and your baby are both well, your baby will stay in the room with you.
* Ensure you wash your hands frequently and also **before** and **after** touching your baby.
* You will be asked to wear a mask for all infant contact
* If your baby is admitted to the NICU and you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19, you and your partner will NOT be allowed to enter the NICU, in an effort to protect your baby as well as 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
* You will be asked to wash your hands and your breast area with soap and water before holding your baby skin-to-skin and/or breastfeeding
* If expressing breast milk manually or with a breast pump you should wash your hands before touching any pump or bottle parts and follow recommendations for proper pump cleaning after each use.

**Please contact your doctor or midwife**

**if you have any further questions or concerns.**

**You can also call the Family Birthing Centre at 416-530-6052**

**(24 hours a day, 7 days a week).**