

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN DELIVERING AT THE HOSPITAL DURING COVID-19



Who receives COVID testing?

- All labor and delivery patients who are admitted, or will be admitted for delivery, will receive screening for COVID-19 including a laboratory test.



When will my COVID-19 test be done?

- All patients with a scheduled procedure will be tested 48-72 hours prior to their admission. A nurse will reach out to you and set-up an appointment for you to be tested.
- Patients admitted to the hospital who have not had a test done or if it has been more than 72 hours since a test was performed will need to have a test completed.



Will my delivery experience change if I am COVID positive?

- Delivery experiences for patients who test COVID-positive will look very similar to those who are COVID-19 negative. When team members and providers are in the room with you, they will be wearing personal protective equipment – masks, face shields and gloves. We will give you the very best care while minimizing the risk of transmission.
- You will also need to wear a surgical mask (provided by the hospital) if you test positive for COVID-19, to reduce the risk of transmission. If you do not test positive for COVID-19, you may wear a mask during delivery but are not required to.



What happens to my baby if I test positive for COVID-19?

- Based on current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and American Academy of Pediatrics, if you test positive for COVID-19 you may stay in the same room with the following precautions:
 - Keep a distance between you and the baby when not providing hands-on care
 - When providing hands-on care to the baby you should wear a face mask, wash your hands with warm soap and water or use hand sanitizer before touching the baby and change clothes or wear a cover gown.
 - A curtain or isolette between you and the baby may help keep the baby safe from virus droplets (if you use an isolette be sure to lock the doors)
 - If non-infected partners or other family members are present, they should wear a face mask and wash their hands with warm soap and water before touching the baby
- Your baby will also be tested around 24 hours of age and again at 48 hours of age for COVID-19.





How long will I have to keep doing these extra precautions if I test positive for COVID-19?

- We recommend continuing these precautions (wearing a mask, washing hands, wearing a cover gown/changing clothes prior to caring for your baby) until the following:
 - You are fever free, without the use of fever reducing medicines, for 24 hours
 - You have improvement of symptoms
 - 10 days since the onset of first symptoms have passed
- If you had no symptoms but tested positive, you can continue enhanced precautions at home for 10 days following your positive test. This includes monitoring for any new symptoms, wearing a mask, frequent hand-washing and wearing clean clothing when around your baby.



What if I am too ill to care for my baby in the room?

- If you are too ill to care for your baby in the room, a private room, if available, can be used for the newborn and a designated (healthy) caregiver may stay with the baby. The designated caregiver should limit movement within the hospital and avoid common areas. Ideally, he or she would remain in the room with the baby and order a guest tray. The designated caregiver should not be moving between mother and infant's room. The designated caregiver should wear a cloth face mask and a gown while caring for the baby. If the baby become symptomatic or tests positive then the caregiver as defined by the family would need to wear all PPE (gown, gloves, surgical mask and face shield)



What is a designated (healthy) caregiver?

- Designated caregivers must be free of any signs of illness. Individuals at high risk for severe disease (e.g., underlying cardiopulmonary disease, poorly controlled diabetes) are advised not to visit/be caregivers.
- Designated caregivers include, but are not limited to:
 - Parent/stepparent
 - Spouse/significant other
 - Other defined caregiver
- Designated caregivers must:
 - Be 16 years of age and older (siblings of the newborn who are less than 18 years of age cannot serve as a designated caregiver)
 - Always remain in patient room as appropriate
 - Limit movement within the facility and avoid common areas
 - Be free from illness, such as fever, sore throat, cough, diarrhea, vomiting or runny nose
- Exceptions may be made in certain situations and can be discussed with patient care teams.



Can my newborn contract COVID-19?

- Newborns can contract COVID-19 through respiratory droplet transmission both through the nearby air and on surfaces, just as adults can. Please contact your pediatrician for guidance on how to best care for your newborn.



Can I take my baby home if I test positive?

- If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and are ready to be discharged from the hospital, you will be allowed to go home if you have a healthy designated caregiver accompanying you and your baby.



Can I breastfeed if I am COVID positive?

- Yes, you can breastfeed while taking precautions (i.e. wearing a mask, washing hands, changing clothes/wearing a cover gown prior to feeding). You may also express breast milk using a dedicated breast pump during the time of illness and maintain your milk supply until criteria have been where you no longer have to take extra precautions.
- Expressed breast milk can be fed to the newborn by a healthy designated caregiver.



If I test positive for COVID-19, can I have a designated caregiver with me or will I labor alone?

- You will not labor alone. You may have one designated caregiver with you during labor and birth. Your designated caregiver will be evaluated upon entry to the hospital, which includes screening questions and a temperature check.



What about a doula or birth coach?

- If your COVID-19 test is negative or are awaiting the results during labor you may have a birth coach or doula present if you choose. The birth coach/doula may stay until shortly after your delivery and will be asked to leave at that time. If your COVID-19 test comes back positive during labor, the birth coach/doula will be asked to leave at that time. If you are COVID-19 positive they will not be allowed during your hospital stay.
- The birth coach/doula must wear a mask at all times when in the facility.



Will my designated caregiver be tested?

- At this time we are not providing COVID-19 tests to designated caregivers. We are actively monitoring the clinical and community landscape. We are poised to respond to changes to give the right care at the right time. If your designated caregiver has been tested due to symptoms or possible exposure and has tested positive, they cannot come to the hospital with you. A different healthy caregiver should be designated.