

# Maternity care during the Coronavirus outbreak

Information for patients

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

***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>*

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. We have reduced the number of face to face contacts you will need during your pregnancy, carrying out some as telephone consultations.

All staff wear personal protective equipment (apron, gloves and face mask) when in close contact with you. We will telephone you before any face to face appointments and ask you about your health and that of your household members. We may delay appointments, if you or a household member, has any symptoms of coronavirus.

You will need to attend all appointments on your own unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability).

**Please remember that antenatal care is ESSENTIAL for the health of you and your baby so please keep all your appointments.**

**If you develop symptoms of coronavirus when a face to face appointment is due, please telephone 01535 294212 so we can discuss a plan of care.**

It is expected that the majority of women who are exposed to the Coronavirus will experience only mild or moderate flu-like symptoms. As a precaution it is recommended that all pregnant women maintain social distancing, particularly towards the end of pregnancy (after 28 weeks).

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (where this absolutely cannot be done from home)
- Stay **two metres (6ft)** away from other people
- **Wash your hands as soon as you get home**

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.

## **Community Midwifery Appointments**

Booking appointments will be undertaken over the telephone. Your community midwife will arrange a long telephone conversation with you and 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.

You will then be invited to attend a dating scan where you may also have your blood pressure taken; a urine sample collected; you will be weighed and have any blood taken for any screening tests that you have requested.

**You will be offered a 20 week fetal anomaly scan** by letter, at the hospital or health centre.

**Your 16 week and 25 week** appointments may also take place over the telephone.

**From 28 weeks** onwards your appointments will be face to face. You will receive a phone call from a member of the team prior to your appointment. You will be asked if you or any members of your household have any symptoms of Coronavirus.

If you do, you will be advised to stay at home for a period of time and your midwife will give you further guidance. You will only be tested for Coronavirus if you become unwell and need to be admitted to hospital.

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). We understand that attending alone may be upsetting for you but this is to ensure we have a limited number of people entering the department, therefore reducing any risks of infection.

## **Hospital Appointments**

If you are having shared care with an Obstetrician at the hospital you may need to attend your appointment - or you may receive a phone call from the Obstetrician.

## **Scans**

If you have a scan appointment, please attend alone unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability) at the allotted time.

## **Urgent care**

If your baby's pattern of movements changes or reduces in number, or you have any other concerns about your pregnancy, please call and speak to a Midwife promptly:

Maternity Assessment Centre Monday-Friday 0800-1900 –  
01535 292410 /01535 292120

Labour Ward (24 hours) – 01535 292401 /01535 292402

## **It is essential that you seek advice if you have any concerns**

If you are advised to attend the unit please attend **alone** unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability and need support) at the allotted time.

If you or a household member is symptomatic of coronavirus please do still telephone us for advice if you have concerns about your pregnancy, but please ensure you inform us of any symptoms you have so we can be prepared.

## **Parent Education Classes**

Following Government advice, we have suspended all group sessions and will not be providing any Labour Ward tours. We are working on alternatives and will post updates on our Facebook page *@airedalemidwives*

## **Care in labour**

In labour, when you are ready to come to hospital, please call in advance. The midwife will ask you about your labour and some additional questions about your wellbeing and that of your household members.

When labour is established you can have one birth partner with you, who must not have symptoms of coronavirus.

In addition to aprons, gloves and face masks, our team members wear additional protective clothing including gowns, eye protection and hats at some points in labour. We will continue to look after you with care and compassion and will do everything we can to respect your birth preferences.

If you have symptoms of coronavirus we will continue to provide you with the same level of care but may recommend different choices for your labour, for example an early epidural (to minimise need for general anaesthetic if emergency delivery is needed), continuous electronic fetal monitoring and you will be unable to use the birthing pool.

In emergency situations our team members will have to put on their personal protective equipment prior to entering the room, which may cause delay. We are regularly practicing for all kinds of emergencies to help us prepare.

We will also escalate any concerns about you or your baby extra early to reduce the risk of significant emergencies.

## **Induction of labour**

If you are booked to come into hospital for induction of labour you will be asked to call at a designated date/time in advance. The midwife will ask you about your labour and some additional questions about your wellbeing and that of your household. Your birth partner will be able to join you once labour has established.

## **Planned caesarean sections**

If you are booked to come into hospital for a planned caesarean section you will be asked to attend at a designated date/time. Most of your pre-operative assessment will be completed at your last antenatal clinic appointment, but you will need to attend a clinic the day before your operation for bloods taking. Your birth partner will be able to accompany you during your caesarean.

## **Birth at home**

At the current time we are assessing our homebirth provision on a case by case basis. Unfortunately, at times we will be unable to support homebirths but we hope to reintroduce a full homebirth service as soon as we can.

## **After your baby is born**

Once your baby is born you and your partner will continue to be cared for by the labour ward team for a short while. You will be encouraged and supported to breastfeed.

You will then be transferred to ward 21 for your ongoing care. Your partner will not be able to accompany you to the ward. We understand that this is an anxious time and being separated from your partner is particularly challenging and we will support you with an early discharge wherever possible.

However we advise you to stay in hospital until you and your baby are ready for discharge.

## **When you get home**

First day home: You will receive a phone call from a Community Midwife when you get home where a plan of care will be discussed with you. If this is your first baby, your Community Midwife will arrange to see you.

Postnatal Day 3: You will receive a phone call and feeding support will be offered.

Postnatal Day 5: You will be invited to attend a postnatal clinic so that baby can be weighed and the newborn blood spot screening test will be carried out. If this falls at the weekend, you may be asked to attend the clinic at the hospital.

Postnatal Day 10: Postnatal review in clinic. Your baby will be weighed and you may be discharged from Midwifery care to the care of the Health Visitor. If this falls at a weekend, it may wait until the following Monday.

You will be informed if you need any further appointments after this.

## Registering the birth of your baby

*The Registration of Births has been suspended until further notice - please see more information available at:*

*<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/births-deaths-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/births-and-naming/register-a-birth/>*

## Airedale Maternity Coronavirus Advice Line

**Tel: 01535 294212** This advice service is for women receiving Airedale Maternity Care, and for staff working at Airedale Hospital, to answer any non-urgent questions relating to your pregnancy and your on-going care.

A midwife will be available to answer the telephone line Monday to Friday 9am-4pm - please **DO NOT** text this number, you will not receive a response. You will not be able to leave a message.

**Remember: We are here for you throughout your pregnancy, even if you have symptoms of Coronavirus.**

**Please attend essential appointments and call us to discuss your appointment if you develop symptoms of Coronavirus.**

