

Maternity care during the Coronavirus outbreak

Information for patients

Version 4 - December 16, 2020

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, eye protection and face mask) when in close contact with you. When you arrive for your appointment we will ask you about your health and that of your household members. Please do not attend if you have symptoms, but do telephone us to discuss your well-being and plan of care. We may still wish to see you.

One birth partner is able to accompany you at your dating scan and at your 20 week anomaly scan. They are also able to accompany you to any maternity assessment centre appointment and any attendances on labour ward.

We are working through the latest guidance and hope to be able to support partners at other appointments wherever possible. In the meantime please attend alone unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability).

You and your partner will be asked to wear a face covering when attending appointments, if you do not have one of your own there will be one at the entrance you can apply.

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**

Your employer should undertake a risk assessment with you regarding your pregnancy.

Some women are at increased risk of complications with coronavirus infection, these include:

- Black and minority ethnicity (BAME) groups
- Maternal age over 35
- Overweight or obese women
- Pre-existing comorbidities; particularly diabetes

If you fit into any of these categories we advise that you are particularly stringent in social distancing guidance.

If you test positive for coronavirus at any time during pregnancy, regardless of your risk factors, please inform your community midwife as we may advise additional surveillance for you.

COMMUNITY MIDWIFERY APPOINTMENTS

Booking appointments may be undertaken over the telephone. Your community midwife will arrange a long consultation with you and will take lots of information and provide advice and guidance. They will also discuss screening tests for you and your baby, and ask for your consent for the ones you choose.

Following your telephone booking you will be invited to attend a face to face appointment with the midwife, where you will have your screening bloods taken if consented, and an antenatal check including blood pressure, urine testing, height and weight measurements.

You will be invited to attend a dating scan

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

At 16 weeks you will be offered a face to face appointment with the midwife

At 25 weeks you may be offered a telephone or face to face appointment

From 28 weeks onwards your appointments will be face to face

Partners are able to accompany you to dating and 20 week anomaly scans. Partners are also able to accompany you to any appointment on the maternity assessment centre (MAC) or labour ward. We are working through the latest guidance and hope to be able to support partners at other appointments wherever possible. In the meantime please attend alone unless you need support from a carer/relative (for example, if you have a disability).

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 dating or 20 week anomaly scan appointment, you are able to bring one birth partner with you. In order to minimise the number of people in the antenatal clinic area at any one time, partners are not permitted to attend other scans at this time so 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 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

We are running virtual classes that have been very popular and well received. If you would like to join the sessions please look at our website by searching Airedale Hospital Parent Education or by following this link: <http://www.airedale-trust.nhs.uk/services/maternity-services/parent-education/> - simply choose which sessions you would like to attend and follow the booking instructions on the page.

CARE IN LABOUR

On admission to hospital we will ask to take a nose and throat swab from you to screen for coronavirus. This helps us plan your ongoing care. The results are usually available within 24 hours.

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 attending labour ward one birth partner can accompany you, they must not have symptoms of coronavirus. They will be asked to wear a facemask and will be expected to stay in the labour room with you as much as possible.

In addition to aprons, gloves eye protection and face masks, our team members wear additional protective clothing including gowns 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. 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. You will be given an appointment for a Covid swab approximately 48 hours before planned admission. On admission the midwife will ask you about your pregnancy and some additional questions about your wellbeing and that of your household.

Your birth partner will be able to join you once we are able to provide a side room for you. They will also be able to arrange a 1 hour visit per day whilst you are in a shared bay. We will advise

birth partners to leave overnight should labour remain unestablished, so that they can rest and be more refreshed in order to provide support the following day. They will of course be able to return if things change overnight.

PLANNED CAESAREAN SECTIONS

If you are booked to come into hospital for a planned caesarean section you will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days prior to the operation. You will be asked to attend at a designated date/time. You will also be required to attend a pre-operative assessment appointment and will be given an appointment for a coronavirus swab. Your birth partner will be able to accompany you during your caesarean. On the morning of your caesarean they will be able to arrange a 1 hour visiting slot for the afternoon on the postnatal ward.

BIRTH AT HOME

We are still able to offer a home birth service most of the time. Please speak to your midwife if you are considering a homebirth.

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. Partners are able to book a 1 hour visiting slot on the postnatal ward for the afternoon. Visiting times are restricted and you will be offered a time slot in the morning for visiting on that day. You will be asked to wear a facemask when walking about 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: Your community midwife will visit you on your first day at home and will then agree a plan of care for the rest of the postnatal period.

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.

If you have any concerns about yourself or your baby at any time please call your community midwife / maternity assessment centre / ward 21 – as detailed on your green hand held notes.

REGISTERING THE BIRTH OF YOUR BABY

Please check latest information regarding registering your baby's birth at: <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/births-deaths-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/births-and-naming/register-a-birth/>

AIREDALE MATERNITY CORONAVIRUS ADVICE LINE AND EMAIL

Tel: 01535 294212 / anhsft.maternitycovid@nhs.net

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.

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.

