Bermuda Hospitals Board

# Maternity guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic

Our priority in these difficult times is to protect parents and babies, and all staff working in the Maternity Unit. We'll do all we can to support you and create a nurturing, comfortable environment. However, processes may be changed in response to the level of risk/threat from the virus. Please call the Maternity Unit at 239-1541 or 239-1540 for the most current information prior to visiting.

## Registering with the Admitting Office

Expectant mothers can register with the Maternity Unit by calling 239-1541 or 239-1540 from 8am-4pm Monday to Friday.

## COVID-19 testing to keep everyone safe

As asymptomatic people may not know they have COVID-19, all precautions are being taken to minimise COVID-19 transmission and keep everyone safe. Women who attend the Maternity Unit will be tested for COVID-19 on admission. Women who have a planned induction or caesarian section will be tested 48 hours ahead of time.

## When you go into labour, call before you leave

When you go into labour, call the Maternity Unit on 239-2016 to advise them you are coming in. You and your support person will be screened for COVID-19 risk factors over the phone.

## What to bring for your stay

Please bring soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, tissues, sanitary pads, a minimum of two nursing bras for breastfeeding, breast pads, comfortable underwear, dressing gowns, nightdresses or loose and comfortable daytime clothing and any prescribed medication you normally use. Remember clothes for baby: sleeper, vest, socks, blanket, hat, comb and brush. Personal devices with earphones are permitted, but limit your valuables to essential items only. Large amounts of money or jewelry should be left at home. BHB does not accept responsibility for loss or damage.

## Support people and doulas during the birth

One designated support person can be with you through labour and delivery, and stay up to eight hours after the birth. Doulas may attend the birth with your designated support person. Due to the risk to others, support people who are COVID-19 positive, suspected COVID-19 positive or in quarantine are not allowed in the Maternity Unit.

## Arriving at KEMH

Go through the Emergency Department entrance on Point Finger Road. Put on your mask before entering and use the alcohol sanitizer to clean your hands. Ask the security guard to call the Maternity Unit. A Maternity nurse will come down to get you. The nurse will immediately come down to you, but this may take a few minutes.

# Maternity Unit and COVID-19

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## Labour and delivery

Please be prepared that we will wear protective equipment and masks. Precautions will be taken with all expectant mothers in case they are asymptomatic and do not know they have COVID-19. Expectant mothers who are known to be COVID-19 positive will use rooms in Maternity reserved for COVID-19 patients. Support people who are COVID-19 positive, suspected or in quarantine are not allowed in the Maternity Unit.

## Caesarian sections during the pandemic

If you are undergoing a planned caesarian you will be tested for COVID-19 at the hospital 48 hours before surgery. A support person can be in the operating room for a planned or emergency caesarian section under regional (not general) anaesthetic, as long as the mother has had a negative COVID-19 test within the previous 72 hours. Please speak to your obstetrician if you have questions about procedures for caesarian sections at the hospital.

## After the birth

We know this is a beautiful time for parents to bond with their new baby. A support person can stay up to eight hours after the birth of the baby.

## Visiting

If you stay in Maternity for over 24 hours after the birth, your designated support person can visit between noon and 8pm each day you are in hospital. Doulas may make postpartum visits once per day between noon and 8pm.

Remember to bring your smart phone or mobile device with you. BHB has free WiFi and you can share photos and talk on video and phone with your friends and family. We will do all we can to support you during your stay, and recognise you may need more care from us during these times.

Only your support person and your doula can visit during the pandemic to reduce the number of individuals in Maternity. Children are not permitted. A support person who visits will need to stay in the mother's room during their visit, and cannot leave and return to the Maternity Unit.

## Visiting the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU)

Parents may visit in the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) one at a time.

## Discharge

For the personal safety of mother and baby, discharges back home will be expedited if safe to do so, where mothers can be fully supported by their loved ones. After a vaginal birth, the goal will be to discharge mothers two days after birth. Women who require c-sections will be discharged after two days if meeting clinical milestones and feeling well.

Please ensure that your baby has an infant car seat – this is required for us to discharge you. Discharge time is 11am, so make transport arrangements in advance.

*Revised 10 November 2021*