

# Pregnancy During the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic

Frequently Asked Questions:

Suspected/Confirmed Covid-19



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Coronavirus disease, also known as Covid-19, has quickly become a worldwide pandemic. During this time, it is likely pregnant women are feeling anxious or worried about how Covid-19 may affect them and their baby during their pregnancy journey.

This information sheet has been developed with the Midlands Maternity and Perinatal Mental Health Clinical Network and Maternity Voices Partnerships, to help support you with any concerns you may have during this uncertain time. It is important to remember to always follow the guidance and advice given to you by your health care professional.

Please be aware that some of the questions and answers below have been informed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists website. For the full and most recent response, please visit: <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>

#### **Q. What should I do if I think I may have coronavirus, or have been around someone who has symptoms of coronavirus?**

If you are pregnant and you have either:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

You should stay at home for 7 days. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital without contacting them on the telephone first. If you have symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19), you can ask for a test to check if you have the virus.

You should speak to your maternity unit to inform them that you have symptoms suggestive of coronavirus, particularly if you have any appointments in the next 7 days. **Please also be mindful to the other possible causes of fever in pregnancy. These include urine infections (cystitis), and other types of infections possible during pregnancy. If you have any burning or discomfort when passing urine, or any unusual vaginal discharge, or have any concerns about your baby's movements, contact your maternity team, who will be able to provide further advice.**

If you are infected with coronavirus, you are still most likely to have no symptoms or a mild illness, from which you will make a full recovery.

If you feel your symptoms are worsening or if you are not getting better, you are recommended to contact the NHS on 111 (or a local alternative), your maternity unit or, in an emergency 999, straightaway for further information and advice.

If you have concerns about the wellbeing of yourself or your unborn baby during your self-isolation period, contact your midwife or, out-of-hours, your maternity team. They will provide further advice, including whether you need to attend hospital.

#### **Q. Can I still attend my antenatal appointments if I am in self-isolation?**

You should contact your midwife or antenatal clinic to tell them that you are currently in self-isolation for possible/confirmed coronavirus and ask for advice about going to routine antenatal appointments.

It is likely that routine antenatal appointments will be delayed until isolation ends. If your midwife or doctor advises that your appointment cannot wait, the necessary arrangements will be made for you to be seen. For example, you may be asked to attend at a different time, or in a different clinic, to protect others.

#### **Q. What do I do if I feel unwell, or I'm worried about my baby during self-isolation?**

If you have concerns about the wellbeing of yourself or your unborn baby during your self-isolation period, contact your midwife or, out-of-hours, your maternity team. They will provide further advice, including whether you need to attend hospital.

If you are advised to go to the maternity unit or hospital, pregnant women are asked to travel by private transport, or arrange hospital transport, and alert the maternity unit reception once on site, before going into the hospital.

**Q. How will my care be managed after I have recovered from coronavirus?**

If you have confirmed coronavirus infection, as a precaution an ultrasound scan will be arranged at least two weeks after your recovery, to check that your baby is well.

**Q. What happens if I go into labour during my self-isolation period?**

If you go into labour during self-isolation, you should call your maternity unit for advice, and inform them that you have suspected or confirmed coronavirus infection.

If you have mild symptoms, you will be encouraged to remain at home (self-isolating) in early labour, which is normal advice to most women.

Your maternity team have been advised on ways to ensure that you and your baby receive safe, and high-quality care and respect your birth choices as closely as possible.

When you and your maternity team decide you need to attend the maternity unit, general recommendations about hospital attendance will apply:

- You will be advised to attend hospital via private transport where possible, or call 111/999 for advice, as appropriate
- You will be met at the maternity unit entrance and provided with a surgical face mask, which will need to stay on until you are isolated in a suitable room
- Coronavirus testing will be arranged
- Your birth partner will be able to stay with you throughout, but visitors may not be permitted.

**Q. Could I pass coronavirus to my baby?**

As this is a new virus, there is limited evidence about caring for women with coronavirus infection when they have just given birth. A small number of babies have been tested positive with coronavirus shortly after birth, so there is a chance that infection may have occurred in the womb, but it is not certain whether transmission was before or soon after birth.

Please be reassured that your maternity team will maintain strict infection control measures at the time of your birth and closely monitor your baby.

**Q. Will my baby be tested for coronavirus?**

If you have confirmed or suspected coronavirus when the baby is born, doctors who specialise in the care of newborn babies (neonatal doctors) will examine your baby and advise you about their care, including whether they need testing.

**Q. After the birth, is there any increased risk to me or my baby?**

There is no evidence that women who have recently had a baby and are otherwise well are at increased risk of contracting coronavirus or of becoming seriously unwell. A recently pregnant woman's immune system is regarded as normal unless she has other forms of infection or underlying illness.

You should however, take care of yourself with a balanced diet, take mild exercise as you feel fit and ensure social distancing guidance is followed. Close observation of hygiene, as always, is important and particularly with family members in the same house.

It is important that your baby is feeding well and gaining weight. If you have any concerns, please contact your midwife. Once restrictions are lifted, we would caution against large family gatherings to celebrate your baby's arrival until more is known about the spread of the virus in the community.

**Do not put off seeking medical advice if you have concerns about your baby's health during the pandemic. Seek medical advice if your baby has a fever, lethargy, irritability, poor feeding, or any other symptoms you may have concerns about.**