

## PREGNANCY FAQs

### How does COVID-19 impact pregnant women? (Answers from experts)

COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning how it spreads. Stay informed with the latest health information per the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/>. COVID-19 and pregnancy specific information may be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html>.

*Please refer to our hospital website as guidance frequency changes.*

#### **Q: Is it safe for me to come to the hospital to give birth?**

A: Our hospitals are the safest place to give birth. Extensive precautions are taken with every patient to prevent the spread of infection. Our staff are trained on how best to prevent infection, as well as to be able to provide the labor support and guidance you need during your birth. In addition, we are prepared to respond to any complications that may occur during labor and birth for both healthy women and those that have higher-risk pregnancies.

#### **Q: As a pregnant woman, should I be tested for COVID-19? Should my family be tested?**

A: The CDC offers testing guidance for COVID-19 here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>. If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath), call your healthcare provider right away. Decisions about testing are at the discretion of state and local health departments and/or individual providers.

#### **Q: As a pregnant woman, am I considered higher risk for COVID-19?**

A: We do not currently know if pregnant women have a greater chance of getting sick from COVID-19 than the general public nor whether they are more likely to have serious illness as a result. Based on available information, pregnant women seem to have the same risk as adults who are not pregnant. However, we do know that:

- Pregnant women have changes in their bodies that may increase their risk of some infections.
- Pregnant women have had a higher risk of severe illness when infected with viruses from the same family as COVID-19 and other viral respiratory infections, such as influenza.

Please reach out to your obstetrician or midwife for definitive guidance.

#### **Q: What should I do if I'm pregnant and test positive for COVID-19?**

A: If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your healthcare provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

## **Q. Can I pass COVID-19 to my baby during pregnancy?**

A: We still do not know if a pregnant woman with COVID-19 can pass the virus that causes COVID-19 to her baby during pregnancy or delivery. Mother-to-child transmission of coronavirus during pregnancy is unlikely, but after birth a newborn is susceptible to person-to-person spread.

A: At this time, there's no vaccine for COVID-19, but there are ways to protect yourself and your family from exposure to the virus. Pregnant women should do the same things as the general public to avoid infection:

- Avoid people who are sick or who have been exposed to the virus
- Stay home as much as possible
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others
- Cover your coughs and sneezes (using your elbow is a good technique)
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol
- Clean and disinfect objects you touch regularly and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe. Use hot, soapy water or a dishwasher to wash dishes and utensils.
- Talk to your health care provider about your health and risk of COVID-19

You can find additional information on preventing COVID-19 disease at CDC's Prevention for 2019 Novel Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

## **Q: Should I go to my next OB appointment, and will my experience be different in the midst of COVID-19?**

A: It is very important to make your OB appointments. Please contact your OB to determine what that will look like. Telemedicine has made it possible to have virtual appointments; however, you will need to check with your own provider for direction.

## **Q: Is it still safe to have an ultrasound?**

A: Contact your delivery provider for specific advice on attending your ultrasound. If you do have an ultrasound, most offices are trying to limit the number of people in the office space in order to decrease the potential spread of the virus. You may wish to ask for pictures to take home to show your family.

## **Q: Does having COVID-19 increase the chance of birth defects or lead to higher birth complications?**

A: We do not know at this time if COVID-19 would cause problems during pregnancy or affect the health of the baby after birth. Based on limited case reports, adverse outcomes such as preterm birth have been reported among infants born to mothers positive for COVID-19 during pregnancy. However, it is not clear that these results were related to maternal infection, and at this time the risk of poor baby outcomes is not known.

A high fever in the first trimester can increase the chance of certain birth defects. If you get sick with COVID-19 or any other illness and develop a high fever, please speak with your healthcare provider as soon as possible.

**Q: Does having COVID-19 during pregnancy make it more likely for me to have a miscarriage or go into pre-term labor?**

A: Miscarriage can occur in any pregnancy. Studies have not been done to see if having COVID-19 during pregnancy could increase the chance of miscarriage.

**Q: I am early in my pregnancy and was looking forward to a tour of the hospital. Can I still participate in a tour?**

A: If your facility is not allowing visitors, in-person tours with individual patients or groups of patients will be cancelled to minimize exposure to our patients, visitors, and colleagues. Many facilities are offering virtual tours or virtual meetings in lieu of in-person tours. Visit the [Medical City Healthcare website](#) and select a Location to see a virtual tour.

**Q: I was scheduled to attend classes next week, can I still attend? How will I know what to do in labor if I haven't attended a class?**

A: If your facility is not allowing visitors, in-person classes with individual patients or groups of patients will be cancelled to minimize exposure to our patients, visitors, and colleagues. Many facilities are offering live, educator-led webcasts, virtual classes or in lieu of in-person classes. Visit the [Classes and Events section of the website](#) to see virtual and pre-recorded class options.