

27 March 2020

Maternity services at St George's Hospital

Information for maternity patients about Coronavirus (Covid-19)

We would like to reassure pregnant women that as a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19), staff at St George's are working very hard to support you, and have introduced additional measures to keep you and your family safe.

We have outlined below the latest advice for our patients, and you can also find guidance online at:

- Public Health England for general advice for the public:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>
- Royal College of Midwives and Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology for Q&As for pregnant women: <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS BUT NO ISSUES WITH YOUR PREGNANCY

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (new persistent cough and/or a temperature) but **NO** issues with your pregnancy (issues relating to your pregnancy), you are advised to self-isolate for a minimum of 7 days (if you live alone) or 14 days if you share a house. **Please call your midwife if you have any concerns.**

'Self-isolating' means avoiding leaving the house, even to buy food or essentials. Instead you should ask for help with groceries, shopping and medication, that can be left on the doorstep. The person affected should stay in a well-ventilated room away from other people in the home, and limit contact as much as possible. For full details on self-isolation visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND ISSUES WITH YOUR PREGNANCY

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (new persistent cough and/or a high temperature) **AND** issues relating to your pregnancy, you should call Delivery Suite Triage for advice on **020 8767 4654** and attend the Delivery Suite (1st Floor Lanesborough Wing) if advised. If you have symptoms you should attend alone and your partner should continue to self-isolate at home,

Pregnancy issues include, but are not limited to:

- Reduced fetal movements (baby not moving as much as usual)
- Pain
- Bleeding
- Waters breaking
- Severe headache

If you are newly pregnant and would like to book for care at St George's, please complete this form:
<https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/pregnancy-referral-form/>

A member of the team will contact you to organise an appointment, which is likely to be a telephone appointment with a form to complete prior to this.

Antenatal Care

For the duration of the COVID-19 alert St George's, maternity services will be undertaking as much antenatal care as can safely be offered by telephone. Services for women who need to physically attend the hospital will continue. **If you are asked to attend the hospital for an appointment, you should come alone.**

You should receive a text from the hospital to confirm that you should not attend St George's for their appointment, and instead expect a midwife or doctor to call you at the allocated time.

Routine and specialist scans will continue to be offered to all women for the time being. Please note, **you must not bring anyone with you to these scans** except where in exceptional cases where explicit permission is given by a midwife or doctor.

CANCELLATION OF ANTENATAL (PARENT) EDUCATION CLASS

In order to reduce the risk of infection, we have unfortunately had to cancel all antenatal education classes. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause - we are working to update resources on our website to help to provide some information that will be useful to you. In the meantime, you may find these links useful:

NCT: <https://www.nct.org.uk/>

NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/>

Caesarean Birth:

<https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/service/maternity-services/new-beginnings/#mcontent>

<https://youtu.be/PvbFYqEzXHA>

Pain Relief:

<https://www.labourpains.com/home>

https://www.labourpains.com/Information_Videos

https://www.labourpains.com/assets/_managed/cms/files/InfoforMothers/Pain%20Relief%20Comparison%20Card/pain%20relief%20comparison%20card%20september%202014.pdf

There are a number of local groups that you may find useful in terms of building social contacts with other families:

Facebook Groups: Tooting Parents Network, Streatham Mums' Network, Balham Mums' Network, St George's Maternity Voices Partnership, Wimbledon Mummy Network, Mummy's Gin Fund

<https://tootingbaby.co.uk/>

MATERNITY UNIT VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

We are doing everything we can to reduce the risk of infection – and, as part of this, the Trust has advised that **visitors are no longer allowed at St George's Hospital**, with the exception of five circumstances including:

Birthing mothers, who are allowed one birthing partner in labour.

Both the mother and birth partner will be screened for COVID-19 on arrival at the maternity unit. If the partner is showing any symptoms of COVID-19 they will not be allowed onto the unit and must return home immediately. If a woman has symptoms of COVID-19, her partner will be provided with full personal protective equipment (PPE).

No visitors, **NOT EVEN THE PARTNER, WILL BE ADMITTED TO THE ANTENATAL OR POSTNATAL WARDS** to minimise risk to babies, new mothers and staff. No birth partners will be able to enter theatres during this time for planned or emergency procedures. This is due to the increased risks of transmission in surgery. The woman will be supported by her midwife and the theatre staff.

Translation and special needs services for women are available by phone. Translators and essential support staff who need to physically attend the hospital to accompany mothers will still be allowed, but will be assessed on the individual's needs, such as impaired hearing.

Women who come into hospital with their partner to give birth must bring in everything they and their baby need for their entire stay, including after the birth. **No further visitors or items will be allowed into the postnatal ward at any time.**

BIRTH PARTNERS WHO LEAVE THE DELIVERY SUITE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RE-ENTER UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Please note: the Lanesborough entrance is now closed and will only be accessible by buzzer to labouring women who are unable to walk from the main Grosvenor Wing entrance.

NO RISK FROM BREASTFEEDING

Current advice is that there is no risk to babies from breastfeeding. However, if you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should wear a mask when you are feeding.

For further advice on feeding your baby, please see our dedicated pages here

(<https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/service/maternity-services/3-after-youve-had-your-baby/feeding-your-baby/>)