

COVID-19-Coronavirus

Information for pregnant women as of the 17th March 2020

This applies to any pregnant woman with symptoms

If you have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- New or continuous cough
- Shortness of breath
- Or if you are living in the same accommodation as someone else who is self isolating

It is advised that you self isolate for 14 days

If your symptoms worsen or you are acutely unwell call

Triage (West Herts NHS Trust) 01923 217343

Keep yourself well

We do not have information about susceptibility of pregnant women to COVID-19. Pregnant women experience changes which might make them more susceptible to viral respiratory infections, including COVID-19. Pregnant women also might be at risk of severe illness compared to the general population as observed in cases of other viral respiratory infections, such as influenza, during pregnancy. If you're generally fit and well your risk is still low.

The best advice is to treat the symptoms that are making you feel unwell. This would include taking paracetamol as per the instructions on the medicine information leaflet to relieve the temperature or general feelings associated with flu like illness. You should try to eat and drink normally and rest as much as needed to help you recover

Dr Edward Morris, President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, said:

“We welcome this precautionary approach as COVID-19 is a new virus, but would like to reassure pregnant women that, as things stand, no new evidence has come to light suggesting they are at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell compared with other healthy individuals. Research and data are key to monitoring the ongoing situation and the UK Obstetric Surveillance System – UKOSS – will monitor all cases of pregnant women who have a diagnosis of coronavirus.

Wash your hands often

Clean your hands frequently each day by washing with soap and water for 20 seconds or using hand sanitiser. This will help protect you and the people you live with.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have one to hand, sneeze into the crook of your elbow not into your hand. Dispose of tissues into a disposable bag and immediately wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

Antenatal Care

If you are self isolating and you are due to see a midwife during your self isolation, please contact your community midwife and they will re-arrange your appointment.

If you have an appointment to see the doctor at the hospital please contact 01923 217343.

If you need to be seen urgently for any pregnancy related issue please call Maternity Triage 01923 217343. A midwife will advise you of the appropriate place to be seen. **Please do not come to the hospital unannounced.**

Labour Care

If you think you are in labour please call Maternity Triage 01923 217343. A midwife will advise you of the next steps. **Please do not come to the hospital without first informing the midwives of your arrival.**

Alexandra Birth Centre

If you are planning on having your baby on the birthing centre and then go into labour whilst in self isolation for either suspected or confirmed COVID-19 you will be required to attend delivery suite, and will unfortunately be unable to attend the birthing centre. This is following all the recommended evidence currently being provided by Public Health England and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Induction of Labour and elective caesarean section

If you have an induction of labour or a caesarean section planned and suspect that you have COVID-19 please contact Maternity Triage 01923 217343 the midwife will take your details and you will receive a phone call back.

Postnatal Care

If you are self isolating and you are expecting the midwife to visit you at home, please inform your community midwife as soon as possible so that they can make arrangements about your care.

Breastfeeding while in self isolation or infected

There is currently no evidence to suggest that the virus can be transmitted through breast milk. Infection can be spread to the baby in the same way as to anyone in close contact with you. The current evidence is that children with coronavirus get much less severe symptoms than adults.

The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of the virus through breast milk or by being in close contact: however, this will be an individual decision and can be discussed with your midwife, health visitor or GP by telephone.

If you or a family member are feeding with formula or expressed milk, you should sterilise the equipment carefully before each use. You should not share bottles or breast pumps with someone else.

**If you believe your symptoms are life threatening
please contact 999**

Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecology (13th March 2020) **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection in Pregnancy Information for healthcare professionals (Version 2)**

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/guidelines/coronavirus-covid-19-infection-in-pregnancy-v2-20-03-13.pdf>

Public Health England (16th March 2020) **Stay at home: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection.**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecology (17th March 2020) **Royal College Professional bodies' response to government coronavirus advice for pregnant women to self-isolate**

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/news/professional-bodies-response-to-government-advice-for-pregnant-women-to-self-isolate/>