

NCH Birthplace

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I pre-register and complete my epidural consult?

A: Epidural consults need to be scheduled through Wendy Ciresi at 239-624-6216. Registration may be completed by email. Call 239-624-6225 to speak with the unit secretary regarding registration.

Q: Can I still have a support person at my delivery?

A: You may choose two adult support people to be with you in the hospital. They will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms, travel history and potential exposures and their temperatures will be taken. They will be issued armbands on arrival and cannot be switched out. Only one support person may stay the night with you after the baby is born and you are on the postpartum unit.

Q: Will I be tested for COVID-19 on arrival even if I'm not symptomatic?

A: At this time, we are testing all moms upon admission to the Birthplace.

Q: Should I bring everything in with me in case we aren't allowed to go back outside? Including car seat, boppy pillow, etc.?

A: We prefer that you leave the items you will be using on the postpartum floor in your car until you receive your room assignment after you deliver. At that point, your support person can go to the car and retrieve those items to be brought upstairs. We ask that your support person minimizes their trips outside of the building other than retrieving essentials from your vehicle.

Q: Are the lactation consultants still available?

A: Yes, there is a lactation consultant available 7 days a week.

Q: Are you still doing newborn photography?

A: Yes, this optional service is still being offered.

Q: Do I have to wear a mask while I'm there even if I'm not sick?

A: While you are a patient at the NCH Birthplace you will be asked to wear a mask during certain procedures and as requested by your nurse and physician. This will include during administration of

epidurals and the delivery of your baby. You may be asked to wear a mask continuously if you meet certain criteria during the COVID-19 screening process. A mask will be provided to you by the hospital or you are welcome to bring your own.

Q: If I have COVID-19 or am symptomatic but have not been tested yet, will I be separated from my baby? Can I breastfeed?

A: There are some scenarios where NCH and your OB will recommend that you and your support person be tested for COVID-19 prior to the delivery of your baby. If mom is positive, she can still bring a support person with her when delivering. This also applies to c-sections. If support person is positive, but mom is negative, we encourage her to choose someone else to accompany her but her original choice will be honored if she desires. Breastfeeding is still an option for positive moms. The staff will educate you on the safest way to breastfeed while minimizing exposure to your newborn. An isolette is placed in the room for baby and parents will be educated on the safest way to care for their baby.

Q: What is the NCH Birthplace doing to protect their patients from exposure to COVID-19?

A: Any patients that are positive or under investigation for COVID-19 will be placed under strict isolation precautions. All our rooms are private, so you will never be sharing a room with another patient during your stay. You will see that all of the staff caring for you are wearing masks. This is for both your protection as well as theirs.

Q: How are infants coming into contact with the virus?

A: Infants can come in contact with the virus both at home from other family members and potentially in a hospital at the time of birth, if the mother is positive for the virus.

There is evidence that there can be transmission of the virus after delivery from the mother to the newborn through respiratory droplets. Respiratory droplets is also the main mechanism of transmission at home.

Q: Are their symptoms severe?

A: In general children display less symptoms than adults. In a recent MMWR report 73% of children reported fever, cough, and shortness of breath as compared to 93% of adults. Children remain at lower risk of severe illness than adults, but infants and children with underlying medical conditions will be more likely to have severe symptoms and require hospitalization.

Q: Are infants being tested?

A: Infants with symptoms such as fever, cough, difficulty breathing, poor feedings, lethargy should be tested especially if there are adults at home confirmed positive for COVID-19 or who have symptoms suspicious for COVID-19. Testing of newborns at the time of birth will depend on the availability of the testing and would aid in facilitating plans for their care after discharge home.

Q: How are families supposed to safely care for their infants during this time?

A: If a family member develops symptoms, they should try to avoid or limit close contact with the infant. If unable to do so, they should practice good hand hygiene and use of a facemask when in contact with the infant.

Q: If a pregnant mother is concerned - what options does she have as far as a birth plan goes (still go to the hospital, or consider an at home birth)?

A: The decision of where to have the newborn should not be affected by fear/concerns over the coronavirus. If a hospital birth was planned/recommended, pregnant mothers should continue to deliver in the hospital.