

COVID-19: Advice for pregnant women

The Centenary Hospital for Women and Children is closely monitoring developments regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and is taking all advised precautions.

The health of our patients, visitors and staff is our biggest priority. We have put in place several measures to keep our community safe while providing the highest level of care.

Preventative measures

Information and advice to the general public applies equally to pregnant women to protect themselves, including:

- washing hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water is not available use an alcohol-based sanitizer
- covering the mouth and nose when coughing (use a tissue or cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow)
- avoiding people who are sick
- minimise touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- avoid gatherings of people
- where possible, keep at least 1.5 metre away from others and practice social distancing
- avoid shaking hands with others
- avoid kissing others, especially children and infants.

What should you do if you are worried you have COVID-19:

- Limit your exposure to other people by self-isolating at home.
- Call your GP or the Weston Creek Walk-in Clinic and let them know you are worried you may have COVID-19.
- Testing and assessment may be arranged by your medical practitioner if they determine it is necessary or they may direct you to the Weston Creek Walk-in Centre or the Drive Through Respiratory Assessment Clinic at Exhibition Park in Canberra.
- It usually takes about 24 - 48 hours for the test results to be returned, but in some cases may take longer, during which time you should remain in self-isolation.
- For the latest COVID-19 testing criteria please visit covid19.act.gov.au

Further information

- The situation is evolving, our priority remains high quality safe patient care. Routine antenatal appointments may need to change, and your maternity care provider will be in contact if changes are required.
- It does not appear that pregnant women are at an increased risk of severe problems from COVID-19 compared to the general population.
- If a pregnant woman is infected with COVID-19 the available evidence shows mother-to-baby transmission is unlikely during pregnancy.
- There is currently no evidence that the virus can be carried in breastmilk. For mothers without symptoms of COVID-19, the benefits of breastfeeding outweigh potential risks of transmission of coronavirus through breastmilk.
- Pregnant women who are unwell or in self-isolation for possible/confirmed COVID-19 that are due to attend a routine maternity appointment or need to be reviewed in the hospital should contact their maternity care provider and request advice on attendance.
- Pregnant women are advised to avoid all overseas travel.
- Vaccination for influenza is highly recommended and will reduce the risk of influenza.
- Pregnant women are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their GP or maternity provider

Early pregnancy and parenting support phone line

An early pregnancy and parenting support phone line has been established to support women with early pregnancy, maternal and child health, breastfeeding and emotional wellbeing concerns. By calling 02 5124 1775 you can leave a message and a health professional will return your call within a business day to provide support. The support line is available Monday to Friday, 8.30am – 5pm.

Visiting

- To protect our patients and our staff, Canberra Health Services have limited visitors into the hospital. In line with this policy, only one visitor is allowed to be with you at the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children per day.
- Visitors who are unwell, or who have travelled overseas including on a cruise ship in the last 14 days, or have been in contact with someone with having COVID-19, should not visit the Centenary Hospital, including neonatal intensive care and paediatrics wards.

This is a rapidly changing situation, please visit covid19.act.gov.au for regular updates.

Source: The Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne and Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists Coronavirus (COVID-19)



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