



March 25, 2020

Information for Expectant Mothers/Obstetrical Patients

COVID-19 (corona virus) is making pregnant women worry about how the virus might affect the health of you and your baby. The OSMH Regional Women and Children's Program is working to decrease risk to you and your baby during your pregnancy and delivery and provide you with the information we currently know about COVID-19 and pregnancy.

If you are **less than 20 weeks' pregnant** and have a medical concern please contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000. If you go to the Emergency Department, screening is in place and no visitors are permitted.

If you are **more than 20 weeks' pregnant** and are unwell with a fever (greater than 38°C), have a cough and/or difficulty breathing, please call:

- Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000
- During regular business hours
 - Your primary care provider (physician or midwife) who will complete a telephone screen and discuss next steps in your care
- After regular business hours
 - OSMH Obstetrics Unit 705-327-9123. A nurse will complete a telephone screen and discuss next steps in your care; Midwifery clients may contact their midwife for screening and next steps.

Advice may include:

- Staying home
- Seeing your family physician, or obstetrical provider
- Going to a COVID Assessment Centre
- Going to the Emergency Department
- Coming to Obstetrics for an assessment

If you are coming to OSMH, please note that our entrances and exits have been restricted and there is a screening process upon entry.

- Main Entrance – screening then central registration then Obstetrics. If your screening is positive, you will be asked to wash your hands and don a mask. If negative, wash your hands and proceed.
- Emergency Department – screening then triage then registration. If your screening is positive, you will be asked to wash your hands and don a mask. If negative, wash your hands and proceed.
- West Entrance - If you are asked to come to Obstetrics after hours, on arrival please push the button on the intercom located just outside the entrance, wash your hands and inform us that you called with symptoms.

****Please bring ONLY ONE SUPPORT PERSON****

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Hospital visitor restrictions have been put in place. Currently the hospital is closed to visitors but Obstetrics is an exception. Women will be allowed 1 dedicated support person during their triage, labour and delivery and postpartum stay. There is free WIFI at the hospital which can be used for virtual (Skype, Facetime) visits with other family members and friends.

Some important facts:

1. The large majority of pregnant women will have only mild or moderate cold/flu like symptoms if infected by the virus. At present there is no evidence that they are at higher risk of severe illness than the general population. Due to normal changes during pregnancy, pregnant women can be affected by respiratory infections. It is important that they take precautions to protect yourself and report symptoms (fever, cough or difficulty breathing) to your health care provider.
2. Pregnant women should take the same precautions to avoid COVID-19 as other people including: washing hands frequently, keeping space between yourself and others, avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth and practicing respiratory hygiene (covering your mouth/nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze)
3. Most people will get symptoms within 5-6 days from the time they were exposed to the virus and a smaller number will become unwell within 0-14 days of exposure.
4. No evidence exists to suggest that pregnant women with COVID-19 are at a greater chance of miscarriage, or that her baby will have abnormalities.
5. There are no known cases where a baby caught the virus from its mother while still in the womb (vertical transmission) or where a baby caught the virus from breast milk.
6. If you are well, COVID-19 positive and breastfeeding, you will receive additional education on how to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to you baby.
7. If you are too unwell to breastfeed your baby due to COVID-19 or other complications, you will be supported to safely provide your baby with breast milk in a way possible, available and acceptable to you.
8. COVID-19 positive moms that are well with healthy infants can room together. You will receive additional education on how to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to your baby.
9. If you are COVID-19 positive, it is recommended to deliver in the hospital to allow close monitoring of you and your baby during labour.

We understand that this is a special time in your life and know how stressful this is for you. We want you to know we are working continuously to understand COVID-19 and its effects. We will update this as new information becomes available.

References:

Toronto Region COVID-19 Hospital Operations Table, Recommendations for Management of Pregnant Women and Neonates with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19, March 17, 2020.
NYGH, Obstetrical Information Sheet, Draft
www.who.int; www.cdc.gov; www.sogc.org