

COVID-19 Information for Pregnancy

The COVID-19 pandemic is continually evolving and information on pregnancy is limited. This information sheet was updated on 3/23/20. We will do our best to continue to update you as things change.

The best sites for staying up to date are: CDC, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Mass General Coronavirus News and Information

Important things to know

- Pregnant people are more susceptible generally to severe illness in outbreaks of other related coronavirus infections (SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV) as well as influenza. So far however, limited data from China, do not show a greater risk for acquisition or severity of COVID-19 in pregnant people compared to other adults.
- To date there is no evidence for mother to fetus infection among women diagnosed with COVID-19.
- No birth defects have been known to be related to COVID-19 at this time, however no studies have been performed. High fever in the first trimester may increase the risk of birth defects.
- An increase in pregnancy specific problems such as miscarriage, preterm labor or distress in the baby is likely only to be a concern if the pregnant person is severely ill. Most pregnant people will not require delivery just because they have become infected.
- A parent may be advised to stay separate from the baby if the parent is COVID-19 positive.
- Infants can acquire COVID-19 through respiratory droplets (through the air), just as adults. There is evidence that there is a 2% chance that a COVID-19 positive mother can transmit the virus to an infant.
- The virus does not seem to pass into the breastmilk, so you can still breastfeed if you become infected. This may help pass antibodies to the baby. If you have COVID-19, you can wash your breasts with soap and water then carefully pump breastmilk and it can be given to the baby by a healthy caregiver. If a parent breastfeeds directly during an infection, precautions such as handwashing, and washing the breast area with soap and water prior and wearing a mask during can help decrease the risk of transmission to infants.
- If you have COVID-19 at the time of your birth, please discuss your feeding plans with your providers.

How to avoid infection

- Wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer frequently throughout the day.
- Avoid interacting with people who are ill with flu like symptoms (fever ≥ 100.4 , cough, shortness of breath)
- Maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet should help minimize the risk
- Practice social distancing – stay at home except for necessary trips like groceries
- If you can work from home – do it! If you have an essential job, such as health care, at this time the recommendation is to practice good hand hygiene and wear personal protective equipment if needed.

What Cooley Dickinson Women's Health is Doing

- **To minimize exposure**
 - 1) **Screening all patients and staff. We also have strict guidelines for when staff should not work and when they can return to work**
 - 2) **Rescheduling non-essential visits and offering telephone visits if needed**
 - 3) **Staff will also all be wearing masks during any patient care to minimize asymptomatic transmission.**
- **Pregnancy is still essential care, but we can safely space out some visits in the first, second, and early third trimester. Please know we are still available 24/7. If you have any questions, concerns or want to be seen sooner – please call us at 413-586-9866**

For low or intermediate risk pregnant patients we will be suggesting the following schedule

- OB Intake (first visit in first trimester) – Over the phone visit
- 11-12 weeks – Seen for possible genetic testing and OB physical
- 20 weeks – Anatomy Ultrasound and appointment
- 26-28 weeks – Glucose test and appointment
- 32 weeks – Routine Visit
- 35 weeks – Routine Visit
- 37 weeks – Routine Visit and GBS testing
- 39 weeks – Routine Visit then weekly until birth
- For high risk pregnancy patients -please speak to your provider about your visit schedule

If you or a household member develop symptoms (fever ≥ 100.4 , cough, shortness of breath) or have confirmed COVID-19 or exposure to someone with Confirmed COVID-19, please call our office for advice or call your primary care provider. Please call prior to coming in so we can prepare for your arrival.

Visitation: During this time, Cooley Dickinson is limiting visitors. For the Childbirth Center you can have 1 healthy support person with you for your entire stay (this means it must be the same person). No children under the age of 18. We know this can be hard if you were planning on having multiple support people. Please know we are only doing this to help protect you and our staff. The Labor Support person is asked to stay in the labor room with the patient and avoid leaving the room to help us limit exposures. Please make plans for this (think about child care, pet care, etc.). The hospital will provide meals and snacks for the support person as well as the patient.

Effective 3/19/20, we will no longer allow any support people to attend office visits.

We understand this can be a stressful time for pregnancy and bringing a new one into your life. If you are feeling that you are so anxious you cannot sleep or are concerned for depression or general anxiety, please reach out to our office. Also, please see Midwives at Cooley Dickinson on Facebook to find out about virtual support groups we will be offering during this time. We can also schedule individual telephone visits with a provider.