

COVID-19 & Having Your Baby

Frequently Asked Questions



MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach is a very safe place for mothers and babies. We may test patients admitted to the Cherese Mari Laulhere BirthCare Center even if no symptoms are present, to provide the highest level of safety and care for you and your baby. Our goal is to keep the birth experience as "normal" and joyous as possible.

What to Expect During this Pregnancy & Birth If I'm Not Positive for COVID-19

What care will be available during pregnancy and childbirth?

- Our goal is to provide quality prenatal and postnatal care. Some of your visits may be virtual, and we will strive to answer all your questions and make certain you're safe and feel well cared for.
- You can expect clear communication by all BirthCare Center staff.
- Appropriate pain relief strategies, like epidurals and IV medications, are still available.
- Mobility, birth positioning and comfort techniques are still allowed, but we are restricting out-of-room movement by you and your support person for everyone's safety.
- Delayed cord clamping is available when clinically appropriate.
- You may bank/donate your baby's umbilical cord blood.

Can a support person be present during labor and birth?

Yes. We strongly believe that good labor support is important for labor success. At this time, you may have one healthy adult support person throughout your stay. This person must provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 or a negative COVID-19 test taken within the last 72 hours. They should come prepared to stay with you in your room throughout labor and will be required to wear a mask. Your partner-in-care may cut the umbilical cord, when desired and appropriate. We will provide food for your support person, if requested. In addition, a doula will be permitted to be present during labor and delivery, if the doula complies with infection control guidelines.

Is there an option to have virtual support during labor and birth?

Yes. WiFi is available and you may use virtual options via your own phone or tablet. We are unable to provide a device for this purpose.

How will my baby and I be protected from COVID-19 during labor and delivery? What are the policies about wearing a mask for pregnant and postpartum women?

You and your support person will be in a room by yourselves during labor and delivery. All staff will be wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment to assist you during the delivery of your baby.

You and your support person will be kept in a room by yourselves and asked to wear a mask while in the Mother/Baby (postpartum) Unit.

May I hold my baby skin-to-skin after delivery?

We want you to hold your baby skin-to-skin as much as possible and we want your baby to room with you around the clock.

May I breastfeed my baby?

Yes. We completely support breastfeeding because it's the healthiest thing you can do for you and your baby. All our nurses can assist you, but we also have a dedicated team of lactation consultants available to provide additional support.

Please be advised that we do not routinely provide pacifiers as they can impact breastfeeding in the early days. We recommend you utilize them once breastfeeding is well established (usually when your baby is 3-weeks-old). Formula is only provided for medical indications or by maternal request.

If I have a boy can he be circumcised?

Yes. Please let your obstetrician know that this is your wish ahead of time.

What am I permitted to bring to the hospital with me?

You can bring an overnight bag with your personal hygiene and self-care items. We recommend you use our hospital gowns during and after delivery. Also, bring items that you may want during labor for comfort.

When can I expect to be discharged following birth?

If there is any medical need, we will keep you in the hospital as long as needed. However, if labor and birth have gone smoothly and you and your baby are doing well, you may go home within a day.

What to Expect During this Pregnancy & Birth with Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Diagnosis**Can a support person be present during labor and birth?**

Yes. At this time, you may have one healthy adult support person throughout your stay. This person must pass a health screening. They should come prepared to stay with you in your room throughout labor and will be required to wear a mask. We will provide food for your support person, if requested.

**Will I be able to hold my baby skin to skin after delivery and have my baby stay with me at all times?**

If you are confirmed to have COVID-19, your baby may be separated from you depending on the severity of your symptoms. We know that separation from your baby will be difficult, but our utmost concern is the health of you and your baby.

If due to illness you and your baby are separated, we will ensure you are assisted with breast pumping, so you can still provide breast milk to your baby.

Can COVID-19 be passed from me to my baby during the pregnancy?

While this is always a worry with any infectious disease, this does not seem to happen with COVID-19. We do not know for certain, but in the U.S., we have not seen evidence of mother-to-baby spread before birth. The virus has not been found in samples of amniotic fluid or breast milk.

What will happen if my baby tests positive for COVID-19?

After delivery, your baby will reside in the nursery under the care of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) hospitalist team, regardless of whether your baby is symptomatic of the illness or not.

What support will I receive following discharge?

We are working to provide contacts via phone or face-to-face apps for new moms to have questions answered and assist with any concerns or anxiety you may be experiencing during this challenging time.