



# PROTECTING YOUR BABY IN THE HOSPITAL AND AT HOME

## COVID-19

### Prevention Measures during a Pandemic

Since you will soon be giving birth, we want to inform you and protect you against COVID-19 as well as protect your family, other families, and our staff. Preventive measures must be applied at the hospital and when you return home, whether or not you have been diagnosed with COVID-19. **Thank you for your cooperation.**

According to current knowledge, it does not appear that a woman can pass on the virus to her baby during pregnancy. The virus is spread through contact with carriers and contaminated objects.

**When you think it's time to go to the hospital for the birth, or if in doubt, call your hospital's maternity unit.**

The nurse will question you and your companion on these points:

- Do you have or have you ever had COVID-19?
- Have you been in close contact with someone with COVID-19?
- Do you have any of the following symptoms: fever, onset or aggravation of cough, difficulty breathing, or sudden loss of smell without nasal congestion, with or without loss of taste, etc.?

If this is the case, specific protective measures will be implemented, in addition to general measures.

## AT THE HOSPITAL

### Before the Birth

**If your companion cannot be present, video technology will be provided (iPad®).**

- All personnel wear masks at all times as well as eye protection when closer than two metres to the parents.
- **Only one adult person** with no symptoms of COVID-19 will be admitted to accompany the mother during labour, delivery, and the postnatal stay:
  - **The companion must wait outside the hospital** while the pregnant woman's stage of labour is assessed. He or she will be contacted once the mother has been admitted to a room and will be asked to bring all the personal belongings provided (luggage, snacks, nursing pillow, and car seat).
  - If the woman being admitted has a high-risk pregnancy (HRP), the companion must ask the nurse or the assistant head nurse if and when he (or she) can be present.
- The mother and companion must **remain in the room** with the door closed at all times. No movement outside the room is allowed, except to get a meal (snack bar or cafeteria). The mother's meal will be served.
- **No other visitors are allowed** for the entire stay.
- All must comply with the recommended prevention measures: hand washing, physical distancing when possible, face covering or procedural masks in hallways and when hospital staff is in the room, etc.

### **In addition, if the MOTHER has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or presents with associated symptoms:**

- She must wear a mask and the companion must wear a mask and a gown.
- Depending on the situation, she may be transferred to a COVID-19 designated centre for delivery.

### After the Birth

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (more than 60% alcohol):
  - **before and after any contact with the baby;**
  - when your hands are dirty (before and after meals, after using the bathroom, etc.).

## In case of COVID-19 infection or associated symptoms

You must take the precautions given below, since there is a risk of transmission to your baby after birth via your hands and from droplets when you breathe or cough:

- To the degree possible, the companion or a dedicated person must **care for the baby**.
- **Wear a mask and wash your hands before any contact with your baby** and keep the mask on as often as possible between contacts. If you have to remove it, make sure you are at least two metres away from your baby or anyone else.
- **Avoid contact** with your child's nose, eyes, and mouth.
- **Cough into the crook of your elbow or a handkerchief** and throw the handkerchief away immediately, then wash your hands with soap and water.

### Measures related to breastfeeding

According to the latest research, the virus is not transmitted in breast milk. Breast milk contains many immune factors to fight infection. **You can breastfeed and have skin-to-skin contact if your condition permits.** Bathe and put on fresh clothes before breastfeeding. You can also express your milk if you need to be separated from your baby.



## AT HOME

A CLSC nurse will call you within 24 hours of returning home to monitor your health and that of your baby. Follow-up is then offered as needed. **If symptoms associated with COVID-19 develop, the health-care professional should be notified.** Follow the public-health recommendations issued for the entire population during a pandemic. If you are experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression, you can contact the Info-Social service at 811, option 2.

### In case of COVID-19 or associated symptoms:

- **Inform the health-care professionals** in touch with you. A nurse from the CLSC will call you every two to three days for two weeks to check on your condition and that of the baby.
- To the degree possible, a person other than you **must care for the baby**.
- **Remain confined in your home and do not receive visitors** for the duration recommended by Public Health and follow the isolation guidelines at home: visit [santeestrie.qc.ca/covid-19](https://santeestrie.qc.ca/covid-19) | *Population* | *Other ressources* | *Instructions* | *waiting for results*, *isolation and more*.
- **Wear a mask and wash** your hands before and after contact with your baby.
- **Regularly wash surfaces, objects, and toys** in your home that are frequently touched. Use ordinary cleaning products or soap and water.
- **Watch your baby for possible signs and symptoms:** cough, fever (38°C or higher taken rectally), difficulty breathing, vomiting, or diarrhoea. If your child has a fever or difficulty breathing, go to the emergency department immediately. For other symptoms or concerns, call Info-Santé at 811.

## Recommendations for wearing a mask or face cover in case of COVID-19 or associated symptoms

If available, wear a procedure (or surgical) mask. If neither is available, a face cover (non-medical mask) made of fabric (scarf or manufactured mask) should be worn. **Anyone wearing a mask or face shield must observe the following instructions:**

- Wash your hands before putting the mask on and after removing it.
- Avoid touching the mask while wearing it.
- Discard or replace procedure masks as soon as they become damp or soiled. Replace fabric face covers as soon as they become damp or soiled.
- Wash cloth face covers daily:
  - Put them directly into the washing machine or into a bag that will be emptied into the machine
  - Fabric face covers can be washed with other items in hot water and then dried completely.
- Do not leave masks lying around on tables, counters, etc.