

Giving Birth during COVID-19

We are taking all recommended precautions during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure safe labour and birth for all of our clients. Recommendations change often as we learn more about COVID-19. We will share any changes with you as they happen.



FOR ALL BIRTHS:

- You may have **one support person** with you in labour (home or hospital)
 - You and your support person should be especially careful about isolating (physical distancing) for at least 2 weeks before your due date
 - Please think about who you would want with you if your main support person is sick when you go into labour
- Family or friends who will care for older children when you are in labour should isolate leading up to your due date. Have a backup plan in case someone is sick.
- You and your support person will be asked if you have symptoms of COVID-19.
 - If you have symptoms when you are in labour, hospital birth will be recommended and you will be put in a special isolation space where staff will wear additional protective equipment.
 - If your support person has symptoms, they will not be allowed to be with you in labour. This is essential to protect others (like midwives and the other pregnant people and babies we care for.)
- You will be asked to **wear a mask** for the pushing stage and you may be required to wear a mask from the beginning of active labour.
 - The hard work of labour causes heavy breathing. We know that the Covid-19 virus can be spread by people who are not sick, or before they have symptoms.
- Your midwives (as well as nurses and doctors) will be wearing masks, gowns, goggles and face shields.
- Due to potential risk of spreading COVID -19 the following **pain relief** options are **not** being offered: nitrous oxide, water birth, showers

At Home:

Homebirth continues to be a safe option for low risk births. All of the above rules apply.

- Your midwives will provide you and your support person with a mask for labour at home
- People using birth tubs will be asked to get out of the water for checks and for birth

At Guelph General Hospital Family Birthing Unit (FBU):

Hospital birth continues to be a safe option for births. All of the above rules apply.

- You can **ONLY** enter through the main door at the back of the hospital during regular hours (emergency entrance after hours – tell security you are going to Family Birthing)
- You will be screened for symptoms before coming up to Family Birthing Unit
- Your support person can **ONLY** come up when you are **ADMITTED in ACTIVE LABOUR**
 - This means you come up **alone** for all visits to triage, including labour checks
 - Support people wait outside of the hospital to be called in when you are admitted
- Your support person should bring in all supplies you both need for your hospital stay
- You and your support person need to stay in your room at all times. The hospital will provide meals for both of you. Patients cannot use the patient kitchen. You may wish to bring snacks.