COVID-19 Testing for Birth Partners

From 5th January 2021 you will be offered a test for COVID-19 if you are coming into hospital to support someone who is giving birth.

- Most people without symptoms will test negative for COVID. If you test positive, please be reassured that many people have mild symptoms or none at all. Please stay at home and call 111 if you need medical assistance.
- The test involves swabbing the inside of your nose and back of your throat with a long cotton bud. It may be uncomfortable but should not cause any harm and is over in seconds. Processing of the result takes about 6 hours.
- If you have tested positive for COVID in the last 90 days and completed the 10 day isolation period you can show the text message you received confirming the date of your positive test and will be assumed negative – you do not need to be tested again.
- Please do not act as a Birth Partner if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are isolating after exposure to someone who has tested positive. In this situation, please discuss whether an alternate Birth Partner from a different household may take your place.

Thank you for taking a COVID test to help us keep Maternity as safe as possible for everyone birthing, babies and staff working here.

### ELECTIVE PROCEDURES

**planned C section or induction**

| Birth Partners will be offered a test the day before and results will be ready on the morning of the procedure. Your whole household may choose to isolate for 10 days before the date of your procedure to minimise the risk of testing positive. |

*Most people without symptoms will test negative for COVID. If you test positive, please be reassured that many people have mild symptoms or none at all. Please stay at home and call 111 if you need medical assistance.*

| LOW RISK - LOW CONTACT (Postnatal ward)** |

- Postnatal ward (after baby is born)
- Theatre (if CS or forceps/ventouse are required)
- Neonatal Unit (if your baby is poorly)

| LOW RISK - HIGH CONTACT (Theatre)** |

- Postnatal ward (after baby is born)
- Theatre (if CS or forceps/ventouse are required)
- Neonatal Unit (if your baby is poorly)

### SPONTANEOUS LABOUR

| Birth Partners will be offered a test on arrival in hospital. Your whole household may choose to isolate for 10 days before term (37 weeks pregnant) to minimise the risk of testing positive. |

| LOW RISK - LOW CONTACT (Postnatal ward)** |

- Postnatal ward (after baby is born)
- Theatre (if CS or forceps/ventouse are required)
- Neonatal Unit (if your baby is poorly)

| LOW RISK - HIGH CONTACT (Theatre)** |

- Postnatal ward (after baby is born)
- Theatre (if CS or forceps/ventouse are required)
- Neonatal Unit (if your baby is poorly)

### DECLINING A TEST

Many people with COVID-19 have no symptoms and spread it to their loved ones, NHS staff and other families without realising they are infectious. Please think carefully before declining the test.

### POSITIVE TEST

**You have COVID and you can infect those around you even if you have no symptoms. The person you are supporting has been exposed to COVID.**

- It is not safe for you to enter the hospital.
- Following discussion with your consultant we may consider postponing the procedure for 10 days until you have completed isolation or calling an alternate Birth Partner. If neither are possible, your partner will be supported by her midwife who understands how difficult this situation is and will take fantastic care of her. You can keep in touch via phone/video calling and it may be possible to record key moments on her phone.

### NEGATIVE TEST

**You have COVID and you can infect those around you even if you have no symptoms. The person you are supporting has been exposed to COVID.**

- Please wear a hospital face mask over your mouth and nose when you accompany your partner into Maternity to protect yourself and others (COVID may develop hours after a negative test or be a false negative).

### UNKNOWN RESULT

**You could be infectious without realising it and spread COVID to those around you.**

- As it takes 6 hours to process a test and obtain a result you will NOT be asked to leave during labour/birth.
- Please wear a mask over your nose and mouth to contain droplets that may be full of virus. Touching your mask transfers virus to your hands and then to anything you touch. Some virus particles may pass through/around the mask and build up in the air and on surfaces around you.

- There is too great a risk of you spreading COVID to others for you to safely accompany your partner to:
  - Postnatal ward (after baby is born)
  - Theatre (if CS or forceps/ventouse are required)
  - Neonatal Unit (if your baby is poorly)

### Postnatal Ward

- Postnatal ward (after baby is born)
- Theatre (if CS or forceps/ventouse are required)
- Neonatal Unit (if your baby is poorly)

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