

Guidance for women regarding swab testing for COVID-19 in pregnancy

In line with Public Health England recommendations, BSUH maternity is now offering ALL patients requiring admission (those who do and do not have symptoms) a swab for COVID-19. This is a national recommendation to enable expansion of screening for COVID-19 infection, isolate and safely care for anyone affected and where possible, contact trace those who have been in contact with COVID-19. This guidance may change frequently according to new developments and Government policies.

Who will be offered the swab?

This swab will be offered to ALL women admitted to the antenatal and postnatal wards, the delivery suite and to women having an elective caesarean section.

How is the swab taken?

Your midwife will take the swab from the nose and back of the throat.

When will the swab be taken?

The swab will be taken on admission to the department. If you are having an elective caesarean, we will take the swab at the pre-op assessment – please note the pre-op assessment will be moved to occur 48-hours ahead of your scheduled procedure.

How long do the results take to come back?

For swabs taken during admission / in labour, we hope to have the results on the same day. Results should be within 24-hours.

If you are having the test pre-operatively one of the team will contact you with the result and confirm the next steps. A positive result may require delaying your procedure – but not if this would cause harm to you or your baby. Each case will be considered and the safest plan discussed and agreed.

Between your test and result you should maintain social isolation at home – even if you have been discharged home.

Will my care change if the test is positive?

If you are found to be positive for COVID-19 your care will remain mostly unchanged – but you will need to be cared for in a single room or specific bay throughout your stay.

We would not be able to support a waterbirth following a positive result for COVID-19.

You would be offered close fetal monitoring in labour and according to any other indications.

Will my baby be swabbed?

If your swab is positive your baby will be swabbed, if your baby is well they can stay with you.

If your swab is positive but your baby needs admission to the neonatal unit, your baby will swabbed and cared for in an isolation nursery on the neonatal unit.

If your baby needs admission to the neonatal unit your baby will be swabbed.

Do I have to take the test?

Undertaking the swab test is recommended, but remains your choice.

If I decline the test will I still be able to attend the unit?

You are always welcome, and we encourage all women to attend for their required care. Your care will not be affected, we will care for you with the recommended infection control precautions. If you develop symptoms for COVID we would again encourage a swab test.

Will I need to be re-tested if I am re-admitted?

Potentially yes dependent on development of any symptoms or time frame from your previous swab.

Can I still breastfeed if the swab is positive?

Yes we very much encourage you to breastfeed if you and your baby are well. If you have a cough you may be encouraged to wear a mask whilst feeding and hand hygiene is important to protect you and your baby's wellbeing.

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding COVID please refer to our social media or contact BSUH.e.midwife@nhs.net or call the advice line on **01273 067283**.

For usual pregnancy queries please contact your midwife or maternity triage.

At BSUH maternity we are doing all we can to keep you and your baby safe during COVID-19 and as always, your maternity care is our priority. We encourage you to attend all of your appointments as directed, and remember always to reach out to us if you have any concerns for your pregnancy.

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Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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