



# *Frequently Asked Questions*

Here you will find answers to your questions about your pregnancy, birth and postnatal care during the Coronavirus pandemic.

We understand that having a baby during these uncertain times is worrying and you may be anxious about what will happen. We want to try and reassure you that we are doing all we can to ensure the safety of you and your families. To do this, we are having to make some difficult decisions that affect the services we provide.

Please know that we are making these decisions with your best interests in mind, whilst also considering the safety of you, your families and our staff. We are constantly reviewing our guidance and are trying to ensure that changes are communicated to you quickly and efficiently. Where we have had to temporarily suspend a part of our service we aim to

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## **Antenatal Appointments**

You can find the schedule of care that you can expect below. Please bring only one birth partner to these appointments, we ask you both wear a mask and advise you to do regular lateral flow tests.

If you have a positive lateral flow test, please contact your midwife and inform them to reschedule the appointment.

Type of Contact	Frimley Park Hospital	Wexham Park Hospital
<b>Booking Appointment</b>	This is your first appointment with your midwife where you receive information on choice of place of birth, diet and life-style recommendations, pregnancy care services, maternity benefits and screen tests. You will have a blood test, blood pressure, urine test and weight.	This is your first appointment with your midwife where you receive information on choice of place of birth, diet and life-style recommendations, pregnancy care services, maternity benefits and screen tests. You will have a blood test, blood pressure, urine test and weight.
<b>First Ultrasound between 11+2—14+1 weeks</b>	Ultrasound scan at hospital Please only bring one birth partner to this appointment.	Ultrasound scan at hospital. Please only bring one birth partner to this appointment.
<b>16 week midwife appointment</b>	Discuss results of blood/ screening tests, scans and discuss further care	Discuss results of blood/ screening tests, scans and discuss further care
<b>Ultrasound scan by 20+6 weeks</b>	Ultrasound at the hospital Please only bring one birth partner to this appointment.	Ultrasound at the hospital Please only bring one birth partner to this appointment.
<b>25 week midwife appointments (for first time mothers only)</b>	To discuss 20 week scan,	To discuss 20 week scan,



FRIMLEY & WEXHAM PARK HOSPITALS

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Working in partnership to improve maternity services



**Frimley Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Type of Contact	Frimley Park Hospital	Wexham Park Hospital
<b>28 week midwife appointment</b>	Measure blood pressure, test urine, measure size of abdomen, screening blood test to check for anaemia and antibodies.  Anti-D if required.  GTT if required.	Measure blood pressure, test urine, measure size of abdomen, screening blood test to check for anaemia and antibodies.  Anti-D if required.  GTT if required.
<b>All other antenatal midwife appointments</b>	The following will happen at all appointments: blood pressure, test urine, measure size of abdomen.  You can find the timings of the remaining appointments in your blue book or <a href="#">here</a>  The timings may vary slightly between each site but your midwife will tell you in advance when they will be	The following will happen at all appointments: blood pressure, test urine, measure size of abdomen.  You can find the timings of the remaining appointments in your blue book or <a href="#">here</a>  The timings may vary slightly between each site but your midwife will tell you in advance when they will be

## **Antenatal Care**

### **Should I still have Anti-D or vaccinations in pregnancy?**

Yes—Any essential vaccinations or injections are still going ahead as normal and it is important you still get them for both you and your baby. They protect against serious and potentially deadly illnesses and stop outbreaks in the community.

We now have immunisation nurses in the antenatal clinics at the hospital to make getting vaccinations easier for you and to reduce the number of visits you need to make to healthcare settings.

We recommend that all women have a flu vaccination during pregnancy as women can become very ill, needing hospitalisation if they catch flu whilst pregnant.

We also recommend that women have a whooping cough vaccination during pregnancy as this will also give some protection to your baby after birth before he/she can be vaccinated at 8 weeks old.

There may be other vaccinations that some people need, talk to your midwife or GP about your individual circumstances.

Research has shown that all pregnant women should take a Vitamin D supplement. Please take one that contains 10 micrograms of Vitamin D. If the cost of buying supplements is an problem for you, please talk to your midwife/GP

### **Can I have a Covid-19 vaccination and booster?**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that pregnant women should be offered the Covid-19 vaccination. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are the preferred vaccines for pregnant women of any age. You can have your first and second vaccine at any stage in your pregnancy, it is also safe to have these whilst breastfeeding, this is the same for booster vaccines. There is growing evidence that unvaccinated pregnant women are at an increased risk of requiring hospitalization from Covid-19.

We would also encourage your support partners to seek their vaccinations,

### **Do I still need my Glucose Tolerance Test (GTT)?**

Yes, your community midwife will assess if you are at risk of developing diabetes in pregnancy, if you are at risk then a diabetes screening at 24-28 weeks is recommended.

### **Can my partner/children come to appointments or scans with me?**

Yes, you can have one person who should be your birthing partner attend appointments with you. Due to space limitations, at Frimley Park they will be asked to stand behind your chair in the waiting area. At Wexham Park they will be asked to wait in their car until the time of your appointment. Children are not able to attend scan appointments, if you bring your children with you, your partner will not be able to attend your appointment, they will be asked to care for your children outside the hospital.

### **Can I have a sweep?**

Yes we are offering sweeps in the community.

### **How can I receive antenatal education at this time?**

You can register for free online guides if you live in the Frimley Trust area. This covers Ascot, Bracknell, Farnham, Maidenhead, North East Hampshire, Slough, and Windsor or in Surrey or South Bucks you can have free access to online antenatal and parenting guides with include top tips from registered midwives Access to the guides including 'Understanding your pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby' is unlimited with no expiry date, so you can return as and when you need and want to.

Register [here](#) and apply the access code 'PARENTING' (or if you live in Surrey it is ACORN) to create an account and access your free guides.

(Access codes are not case sensitive)



## **What happens if I'm worried about me or my baby?**

Please phone us at any time of the day or night if you have any concerns at all. There is always a midwife available to give you the advice or support that you need. We will see you in person if needed even if you are COVID-19 positive, so please don't think that we won't be able to help you.

### **The numbers to call are:**

**Frimley Park: 0300 613 4527**

**Wexham Park: 0300 615 4520**

## **What happens if I think I have reduced fetal movements?**

Please call us at any time of the day and night. Do not be worried about coming into hospital to be checked at this time as we are taking all necessary precautions to keep you safe. Please don't use a home doppler or apps as these do not give a clear indication of the health of your baby. Your midwife is listening to much more than just the presence of a heartbeat when they are checking on the health of your baby. For more



information click [here](#)

## **Inpatient Care**

### **Will I be tested for Covid-19 when I come into hospital?**

Yes, all women admitted to our maternity unit will be tested for COVID-19 on admission, and every 3rd day as an inpatient until discharge.

This is to keep you, other patients and staff safe, anyone with COVID-19 will be accommodated with their own room and facilities, away from negative patients. We still encourage social distancing on the wards and masks to be worn at all times by your birth partner.

### **What measures are in place to keep me safe in hospital?**

We have strict infection control and cleaning guidelines that are being followed at all times. We are requesting that you socially distance from other women if you are an inpatient on our ward areas. We are also asking that you birth partner stay by your bedside, follow social distancing and where a mask or face covering at all time (even when no other people are nearby).

All our staff are using the appropriate PPE when undertaking direct clinical care and are wearing masks at all times in line with government guidance. We ask that your partner does not come with you if they have any Covid-19 symptoms or should be self-isolating but that you arrange for someone else to support you instead.



## **Labour and Birth**

### **What happens if I am having an Induction of Labour?**

You will be contacted at least 48 hours before your induction date to come and have a COVID-19 swab taken before admission.

Your birth partner can stay with you on the antenatal ward between 9am—9pm. If you are transferred to the labour ward overnight for the next stage of the induction process they will be called so that they can join you there.

### **When is established labour?**

This is when you are 4cm dilated with strong, regular contractions

### **How does it work when I'm in labour?**

If you think you are in labour please contact us. You will be assessed over the phone and invited in if needed, you will then make your way to the assessment rooms as normal; this is MAC at Wexham and Labour Ward Triage at Frimley. One birth partner is permitted to support you in these areas.

Two birth partners are permitted to support you throughout your labour and birth

If your baby's birth is imminent your partner should come in with you, especially if this is not your first baby, to ensure they do not miss the birth.

After you have been assessed as being in active labour you will be moved to the room in which you will give birth. Your birth partners can then bring in bags etc. and stay with you until after your baby has been born

### **Can I have a home birth?**

Yes—our home birth service is running as normal. We would recommended that you speak to your community midwife at your next midwife appointment if this is something you are considering. Home birth is a safe option for women receiving midwife led care.

At Frimley Park, there is now a dedicated Lavender Homebirth Team. If you would like to contact them either phone 07557 815975 or e-mail

### **Is the birth centre open?**

Yes. Both Birth Centres are open to women who are able to receive midwife only care.

### **What happens if I'm in labour and have symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test?**

You will be cared for in a dedicated room with it's own toilet and bath/shower.

Your birth partner can attend with proof of negative lateral flow (unless they have had a positive test before you and have not completed their isolation period),

Your baby's heart beat will be monitored continuously throughout labour.

You will not be permitted use the birthing pool as per our Infection Control Teams guidance. Your baby can stay with you after it is born, but we recommend that you wear a mask when close to your baby.

### **What happens if I'm having an elective caesarean?**

You will be contacted at least 48 hours before your caesarean section date to come and have a COVID-19 swab taken before admission.

You will be admitted to the postnatal ward where you will meet the theatre team and someone will explain what will happen and when. Your birth partner can stay with you when you are admitted. Once your baby has been born and you are back on the postnatal ward, your birth partner can stay with you in line with regular postnatal ward visiting hours (between 9am-9pm). Our staff will always be on hand to help you whenever you need it. Please note if you are found to be



## **Postnatal Hospital Care**

### **How long can my birth partner stay after the birth?**

After the birth of your baby, your birth partners can remain with you until you are transferred to the Postnatal Ward, if this is outside of the visiting hours, they will be asked to go home to rest and return in the morning.

Two birth partners can attend the wards between 9am and 9pm. We are not permitted to allow friends and family to visit at this time and ask they wait until you are home before visiting and meeting your baby.

### **How soon after birth can I be go home?**

There are certain checks that are essential for you to have before discharge, such as a newborn examination and a newborn hearing test, which is likely to take a few hours to be completed. We are conducting all of these checks in the hospital before you go home to avoid you making extra trips for appointments once you have been discharged. The quickest time to be discharged after having your baby is around 4-6 hours, this will depend on your clinical needs and wellbeing. Most women will stay at least one night following the birth of their baby.

### **Will I get help to look after my baby/ies after if my birth partner isn't there?**

Yes of course, we will always be here to help you care for your baby. The postnatal ward has midwives and maternity care assistants who are there to look after you and help you look after your baby/ies. We are getting lots of positive comments at the moment regarding the atmosphere on postnatal ward as it is very calm and quiet without visitors.

### **What happens if I have to stay longer than first thought and I need more stuff from home?**

Your partner can bring you more stuff from home when they visit you during our daily visiting hours.

## Postnatal Care At Home

### **When will I see my midwife once I'm at home?**

When you are discharged home you will be contacted by phone the next day and then your visits will be planned with you. There would usually be a phone call on day 3 to see how everything is going with feeding. Your community midwife will arrange a face to face visit for you and your baby on day 5 after your birth where your baby will be weighed and the heel prick screening will be offered. Then there will be another face to face appointment around day 10 where your baby's weight will be checked and if both you and baby are doing well you will be discharged by the midwife to the care of the Health Visitor.

Community midwives are not visiting you at home at the moment so these appointments are taking place at community hubs in the area and you will be told where you need to go for your appointment after your baby has been born. If you or your baby require any additional face to face appointments this will be arranged with you if clinically needed – this is assessed on an individual basis. Please bring only one birth partner to these appointments and we ask you both

Type of Contact	Frimley and Wexham Park Hospital
<b>First day home</b>	If first baby, face-to-face contact in hub. If not first baby and no concerns telephone/video consultation. (can be face-to-face if needed)
<b>Day 3</b>	Telephone contact to check in and discuss how baby is feeding.
<b>Day 5</b>	Face to face contact in hub. Baby weight and heel prick test completed. Postnatal check on mum to ensure she is recovering well from birth
<b>Day 10-12</b>	Face to face contact in hub. Weight and discharge to health visitors if appropriate. Postnatal check on mum to ensure she is recovering well from birth

## **Isn't it safer to stay at home with my baby rather than travel to a hub?**

We have had to take into consideration what the safest option is for you and your families as well as our staff. Midwives attending your home, and then moving onto another home multiple times a day would increase the risk to you and your family well as the midwife. At the hubs we are able to maintain social distancing, clean the rooms between patients and maintain good hand hygiene keeping you and the midwives as safe as possible.

If you have a positive lateral flow test, please contact your midwife and inform them to reschedule the appointment.

## **How do I get support with breastfeeding?**

We understand that not being able to attend infant feeding clinics at this time is difficult. Our infant feeding teams are still available to call if you need them and are seeing women and babies face to face where necessary.

Frimley Park: 01276 522433

Wexham Park: 07881 507023

If you are worried about your newborn you can also call MAC/triage or the postnatal ward where there will always be someone available to help

You can also find  
[here](#)

information [here](#), [here](#) and



## How do I register the birth of my baby?

Most registry offices are now taking bookings to register the birth of your baby, however many are experiencing a large backlog so it may be that you cannot get an appointment straight away,

Normally you need to register the birth of your baby within 42 days of birth. This timing has been relaxed because people were unable to make appointments with the Registry Office during lockdown. However you must still register your baby's birth as soon as you can.

Please call your local Registry Office to find out more and see how they are currently operating. At the moment you can claim for child benefit or universal credit without a birth certificate.

You can temporarily register your baby with your GP surgery using a copy of your birth or discharge paperwork which you will be given when you go home from the hospital. You can send them electronically to save you having to go to the surgery e.g. take a photo and send by e-mail. That way you can still make appointments for your baby with your GP.







**We really do understand how you must be feeling during this time and would always welcome feedback about how we could help ease any anxieties. To keep up to date with COVID-19 changes please access our facebook pages**

**(Frimley Park Maternity Unit, Wexham Maternity)**

**Please contact our Maternity Voices Partnership with your feedback either on their website**

**[www.frimleyandwexhammaternityvoices.org](http://www.frimleyandwexhammaternityvoices.org)**

**or their Facebook page [www.facebook.com/FrimleyandWexhamMaternityVoices](https://www.facebook.com/FrimleyandWexhamMaternityVoices)**