



## **Prenatal Care and COVID Policies to Consider**

The purpose of this document is to guide clients/patients with questions to ask and consider when determining care for themselves or newborn during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every practice, both hospital and community-based, has policies and procedures in place to help decrease risk of transmission and exposure to COVID-19. Although these policies are meant to increase overall safety, it is difficult for clients to understand these policies or have an opportunity to understand them, prior to when they are being asked to follow them. Below are a few considerations and questions to ask when determining setting for prenatal care, birth setting, postpartum care and newborn care.

### **Prenatal Questions and Examples**

- Q). What measures has your practice taken to decrease risk of exposure when coming to prenatal appointments?
- Q). How has prenatal care changed during this time?
- Q). What policies will I be asked to follow when coming to appointments?

Example: To decrease the number of people coming through the clinic some practices have limited number of people who are able to come to prenatal appointments and ask that all patients be without symptoms and wear a mask.

Example: To allow for continued care and education, many practices have added telemedicine options for appointments and classes.

### **Labor and Delivery Questions and Examples**

- Q). How many labor support people/companions may accompany me during labor and delivery and during my postpartum stay?
- Q). What testing, if any, is done to determine if I have COVID-19? What is the turn-around time? What happens if I decline the testing?
- Q). Will I or my support people be asked to wear a mask during my stay?
- Q). What changes if I have COVID-19 at the time of labor and delivery?

Example: Some institutions are recommending COVID-19 testing on all patients admitted to labor and delivery and are asked to wear a mask until results are known.

Example: Some policies limit the number of support people present during labor and birth. They may also ask partners and support people to continue wearing a mask during your entire stay.

## **Postpartum and Newborn Questions and Examples**

- Q). How long is a typical postpartum stay? Is early discharge an option and what does that look like?
- Q). Who is able to be present with me and baby following delivery?
- Q). What are the recommendations for newborns if parent tests COVID positive? Are newborns being separated from parents?

Example: A normal timeframe for postpartum stay in the hospital is 24 hours after vaginal delivery. Some practices are now working with clients/parents to decrease this time and be discharged earlier.

Example: Some facilities are not allowing visitors during the postpartum period and are limiting the amount of support people who can stay during this time.

Example: There are different policies and guidelines recommended if patients test COVID positive; some facilities may recommend separating parent and newborn while others may recommend continued mask wearing and distancing when not feeding.