

## Visitor Information

PRHC's patient programs and services are regularly assessing our family presence policy as COVID-19 activity in the hospital and community changes. For current guidance related to family presence/visiting in Labour & Delivery and the NICU, please visit [www.prhc.on.ca/about-us/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/](http://www.prhc.on.ca/about-us/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/) or speak with a member of your care team.

## Discharge

As long as you and your baby are otherwise well and don't require treatment, you will be discharged home with follow-up arrangements. The same recommendations around hand-washing and distancing will apply at home.

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For continued updates, please follow Peterborough Regional Health Centre on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @PRHC1, as well as the following accounts on Instagram:

@evolvewomenshealth  
@kawarthacommunitymidwives  
@partnersinpregnancyclinic  
@PIPC

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## More information about COVID-19:

Peterborough Regional Health Centre  
[prhc.on.ca/cms/covid-19-novel-coronavirus](http://prhc.on.ca/cms/covid-19-novel-coronavirus)

Peterborough Public Health  
705-743-1000  
[www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca](http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca)

Telehealth Ontario  
1-866-979-0000

Ontario Government  
[www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus)

## INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19 AND PROTECTING YOUR NEWBORN



If you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection at the time of labour, or within the two weeks before, you should take precautions to protect your baby. COVID-19 does not seem to be passed to the baby during pregnancy but could be transmitted in the postpartum period after birth.

It is important to take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus. We know that the virus is spread by “droplet contact”, meaning if you sneeze or cough, the small droplets you produce can land on your baby, or on a surface that your baby touches, putting them at risk.

If you are too **unwell** to care for your baby, they will be cared for in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) or on the pediatric unit. It is important that you care for yourself so you can be well enough to care for your baby when you go home. If you are well enough to do so, you can express and/or pump breast milk for your baby with proper sanitization of your breast, the pump and supplies. You will wash your chest for 20 seconds with soap and water prior to skin-to-skin contact or breastfeeding. If you are too unwell to express or pump, your baby can be fed infant formula. If your baby is born premature (<34 weeks), they may qualify for donor milk.

If you are suspected or confirmed to have the virus, but you are **well** otherwise, you will be cared for on the postpartum unit, and can still participate in the care of your baby, with certain precautions in place.

### Skin-to-skin

Before skin-to-skin contact with you or your partner, we recommend that you wash your chest for 20 seconds with soap and water. This avoids potential exposure to the virus from the droplets that land on your chest.

We may also swab your baby’s nose before initial contact with you, to test for the virus. It is recommended that skin-to-skin contact be limited to the time you are breastfeeding your baby.

### Hand washing

Hand washing is one of the best things you can do to prevent the spread of the virus. Wash your hands often, especially after touching your face, coughing, sneezing, or eating, and before and after touching your baby. Wash with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. You should also routinely clean and disinfect surfaces in your room.

### Breastfeeding

As long as you are feeling well enough, and you wash your hands and chest and wear a mask, you can breastfeed your baby. You should wash your chest/breasts for 20 seconds with soap and water before each time you breastfeed your baby. You can give them the immune benefits of breast milk, while reducing the risk of transferring the virus with the right precautions.

### Feeding expressed breast milk

If expressing breast milk with a breast pump, you should wash your hands before touching any part of the pump or supplies and clean all parts after each use (according to your nurse’s/lactation consultant’s recommendations). You should also wash your chest/breasts for 20 seconds with soap and water. If possible, consider having someone who is well feed the expressed breast milk to your baby. If your partner doesn’t have symptoms or travel history (hasn’t screened positive), they can be involved in the care of the baby. They should wear the recommended protective equipment and wash their hands well.

### Safe distancing

You can also protect your baby by keeping them at a distance when you are not breastfeeding. Place the bassinette six (6) feet away from your bed, and if possible, have your partner perform diaper changes and routine care (with precautions).