

COVID-19 and Labour & Birth (Intrapartum)

Information and guidelines about COVID-19 are continually being reviewed and updated. The messages below may change as our knowledge of COVID-19 evolves. This information is current as of Aug 27, 2020.

1. Can I have family and friends visit me during my hospital stay?

- To keep patients and staff safe, Interior Health has taken steps to restrict visitors to hospitals. These restrictions also apply to your chosen labour support person. Your support person will also be asked COVID-19 screening questions.
- Learn more about visitor restrictions [here](#).
- Friends and child visitors including siblings are not permitted to visit the hospital during this time. Please make arrangements for care of additional children during your labour, birth, and postpartum stay. Big brothers and sisters can meet their new sibling when you are home or, if possible, virtually while you are in hospital. If you are having difficulty with this please reach out to your health care provider for help and suggestions.

2. What will happen when I am in labour during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- One designated support person is allowed with you in hospital for labour and birth. This person will be asked to stay with you in your room as much as possible.
- Certified doulas will be allowed in addition to your support person during your labour and birth. However, there may be some limitations. For example, doulas will not be able to attend your birth if you have symptoms of COVID-19, or if you need to go to the operating room for a caesarean section.
- Tub baths and showers during labour are not allowed at this time if you have cold or flu like symptoms or if you have COVID-19. You may bring in items that you would like for relaxation like music or massage balls. Your support person, nurse, doctor/midwife will work together to help you during your labour and birth. If you have specific requests in your birth plan, discuss them with your nurse, doctor, and midwife.
- Food deliveries to the hospital from restaurants or other family members should be accepted out of the hospital building. Kitchen and cafeterias are mostly restricted at IH hospitals. If your support person requires a meal and there are no other options available, the nurse may be able to request a meal tray for your support person.

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- It is recommended that you bring a small cooler of food from home if you or your support person would like to eat something other than the options available at the hospital. Doula's should also bring food for themselves for the duration of your labour.
- Visit [Interior Health "Having a Baby"](#) for general information on labour and birth

If you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19 and are not in isolation:

- Labour and delivery can still occur at your hospital or in your home as previously planned with your health care provider.
- Your health care provider and any hospital staff will wear personal protective equipment or PPE including a mask, eye protection, gloves and sometimes a gown.

If you are in isolation, but are not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:

- Labour and delivery can still occur at the hospital or in your home as previously planned.
- Your health care provider and any hospital staff will wear personal protective equipment or PPE including a mask, eye protection, gloves, and gown.
- You and your support person will be given a mask to wear.

If you are in mandatory isolation because you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive:

- Your health care provider will still be able to attend your labour and delivery. However, they will recommend that labour and delivery occur in a hospital.
- Your health care provider and any hospital staff will wear personal protective equipment or PPE including a mask, eye protection, gloves, and gown.
- You and your support person will be given a mask to wear.

3. What if any of my household members are experiencing symptoms, in isolation or have tested positive for COVID-19?

- We recognize that family-centered care is very important and will do our best to support you at this time. However, it is also very important that we keep our patients and their new babies safe. There are [visitor restrictions](#) in place at the hospital for safety during this pandemic. Virtual contact is encouraged.