

DURHAM & MARKHAM MIDWIVES

Patient information Sheet - Pregnant and Postpartum Women on COVID-19

1. **WASH YOUR HANDS.** Soap and water are best. Wash frequently, if you go out, after contact with others, before and after you eat. Wash your children's hands regularly as well. The virus is spread by droplets (coughing, sneezing) as far as we know. The virus can live on surfaces up to 72 hours.

2. **SOCIAL DISTANCING.** Stay away from crowds, social gatherings >20 people, parties, play dates. Stay away from anyone who has traveled. This is paramount to contain the virus and limit community spread for us all, but particularly our vulnerable.

3. **NO TRAVELLING.** Tell your family members to restrict any non-essential travel. Stay at home as much as you can to limit transmission. If anyone you know has travelled, they should be self-isolating and monitoring for symptoms at home for 14 days.

4. **EXPECT HOSPITAL AND DOCTORS OFFICE RESTRICTIONS.** Due to the current public health emergency underway, you may experience your scheduled appointments being postponed or cancelled. This will help us focus our work towards managing the pandemic. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know. However, we may be delayed in getting back to you because of a high volume of patients seeking care.

Admin staff are working from home while the clinic is running. We will be answering emails to book or change an appointment or to speak with your Midwife.

Durham and Markham Midwives are asking clients to come alone to visits. The Birthing Suite at Markham Stouffville Hospital is restricting visitors to one consistent support person only per client in labour and no children under 16 years old.

5. **IF YOU OR YOUR INFANT/CHILD ARE SICK.** If you have a fever, cough, have travelled, call Telehealth and get advice about testing and support at home. Don't go to ER UNLESS you are very sick or having trouble breathing. Young children and infants seem to be doing well with Covid-19. There are infants who tested positive. There have been very few or no reported deaths in children. Older people are at much higher risk of becoming severely ill, as are anyone with lung disease or other medical conditions.

6. **RISK TO PREGNANT WOMAN AND FETUS.** As per the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC), they state that at this time, conclude there is no evidence that women who are pregnant experience more severe symptoms when ill (unlike with H1N1).

The pregnancy outcomes of the reported cases have been largely good, with spontaneous and medically induced preterm labour being the most reported adverse pregnancy outcomes. Given the limited data, it is too early to determine if higher rates of adverse outcomes are expected in pregnant women infected with COVID-19. As with SARS and MERS, pregnancy outcomes are likely to be strongly correlated with degree of maternal illness.

7. **CESAREAN SECTION IS NOT REQUIRED** if you have COVID-19 in pregnancy. Unless you are very sick, vaginal birth is still preferred. The healthcare team will wear protective gear. C-section will be performed for the usual reasons.

8. **BREASTFEEDING** is still fine with the same precautions of wearing a mask and washing if you are infected. Separation of baby and mom is not recommended but may be needed for severe cases. Breast feeding may allow for antibodies and immunity benefits for the baby but we don't know.

9. **HOSPITAL DELIVERY IS SAFE.** The hospital staff and facility know how to isolate, and take necessary precautions for safe delivery. At this time there aren't any known infected individuals in most hospitals. The infection is being transmitted in the community, not the hospital.

10. **GATHER A VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP.** Text with a group and communicate with your neighbours to keep everyone calm and help each other out. We need each other right now. Community is what unites us and this can be done without being physically together.

Last updated: Monday, March 19, 2020

Subject to change
