

COVID-19 Maternity update

Epworth Freemasons



100
YEARS OF CARE
1920-2020

Friday 20 November 2020



Epworth Freemasons is doing everything possible to minimise potential exposure to COVID-19 within our hospital. We have a number of maternity protocols in place to protect you, your care team and other families in our hospital.

We continue to review and update these, as the situation changes, so we encourage you to keep in touch via our social media and website.

Things may look different in areas of our maternity hospital at the moment, but rest assured the same excellence in care remains. We will continue to do all we can to support you before, during and after your baby's birth.

Please understand these protocols have been put in place to minimise the number of people coming and going within our unit, to reduce potential COVID-19 exposure to you and your baby. We are doing everything that we can to protect you, our staff and doctors.

We have compiled the most frequently asked questions about maternity and how we are caring for you and your family during COVID-19.

Can my partner or support person stay with me during my stay in both the Birth Suite and Postnatal Ward?

We know how important it is to have your partner or support person with you for your baby's birth and in those early days of their life. Your partner or support person remains welcome in the Birth Suite and Postnatal units at Epworth. Please be aware that you can't swap support people. Your partner or support person will be required to wear a mask while in our hospital.



Can my partner or support person leave the hospital and come back?

We urge your partner or support person to limit the number of times they come and go from our maternity unit and only leave if absolutely necessary. This minimises potential exposure to COVID-19 and the risk of bringing it back into the hospital.

Can I have visitors?

Yes! From Friday, 20 November 2020, **you may have two visitors a day**, in addition to your partner or support person.

These two visitors each day may be your baby's siblings, or two other loved ones. These visitors may stay for up to two hours during our visiting hours 10am -1pm or 4pm – 7pm. Anyone coming into our postnatal ward will need to have their temperature checked on the ground floor, before coming up to maternity.

I am booked to give birth at Epworth Freemasons, do I need to have a swab?

No, you don't. We no longer require our maternity patients and their partner or support person to have a COVID-19 test.

I am booked for an elective Caesarean section, do I need to have a swab?

No, you don't. We no longer require our elective Caesarean section patients and their partner or support person to have a COVID-19 test.

I need to have a general anaesthetic for my elective Caesarean section, do I need to have a swab? Yes, you do. A general anaesthetic for an elective Caesarean section is the only reason you would need to have a COVID-19 swab, as a maternity patient. This should be done 3 -5 days before the date booked for your Caesarean. Your doctor will give you information of what's required and how to book in for your test. Epworth Freemasons has its own COVID-19 patient screening clinic, located within the Grey Street car park (B1). This will allow you to be tested easily, without having to get out of your car.

If I have had a COVID-19 test, what do I have to do in the days between my test and planned Caesarean section under general anaesthetic?

You will need to ensure that you self-isolate yourself before the big day. This is to protect yourself, your care team and other families within our hospital.

- It is important you remain at your place of residence/home.
- Do not leave except to seek medical help or in an emergency.
- Do not go to work, school or public areas.
- We advise against using public transport, taxis or ride share services where possible. If you require any of these transport options, please wear a mask.
- Do not allow other people into your place of residence if they do not live there.
- Avoid sharing household items. Please do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, utensils, towels, bedding or other items with any people in your home. After using these items, you should wash them thoroughly with hot water and detergent.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use alcohol-based hand sanitiser if soap and water is not available and your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay 1.5m from others in your home.

Can I still stay at the Park Hyatt?

The current situation means that we have to suspend our Maternity Outreach Program at Park Hyatt Melbourne. This decision is to ensure that our patients, staff and doctors are as safe as possible, by reducing their exposure to people outside of the hospital, including hotel staff and guests. We continue to monitor the situation and will review our policies wherever possible, but for now, we do not have a timeframe for this service to return this year.

Will I be guaranteed a private room?

Yes, all of our inpatients enjoy private rooms and ensuites at Epworth Freemasons.

Can we visit our newborn baby in the Special Care Nursery?

Yes, the parents of a newborn baby within our Special Care Nursery can keep visiting however the restrictions on other family members remain, including siblings.

Can I go home early?

Epworth Freemasons continues to allow this and provides early discharge packages to women who wish to return home before their stay is due to end. Please know that you are under no obligation to go home early and our midwives will discuss all of your options. This is a regular service for families and it is not because of COVID-19.

What if I become unwell while I am in hospital?

If you start showing signs and symptoms associated with COVID-19 while in hospital, please alert your midwife immediately. We will arrange urgent swab testing to establish if you have the virus. These clinically urgent results usually take approximately 24 hours to return. In the meantime, you will have to stay in your room until we have the results. Our midwives will continue to care for you, using personal protective equipment (PPE), until we know the test results.

Will you still have Lactation Consultants available during and after my inpatient stay?

Our specialist Lactation Consultants continue to provide a wonderful service to all of our new mums. The inpatient service continues and we have lactation consultants available for one on one appointments after you go home. If you would like to speak with one of our Lactation Consultants, please don't hesitate to call 03 9418 8310 or email breastfeedingservices@epworth.org.au

Are you still providing antenatal education?

Our popular face to face Antenatal Education Program is currently suspended. However, we have developed online learning packages that specifically focus on the experience you will have at Epworth. You can watch these in the comfort of your own home and you will be booked in for a live, two-hour online Q&A session with one of our experienced midwives. These are held in small groups so that we can answer all of your questions in real time.

If you have any further questions after your live session, we are also happy to discuss any further queries over the telephone. You can book your classes [via our website](#) or by using the information in your Welcome to Epworth Maternity pack.

If you have any questions about getting a COVID-19 swab test, please call 03 9426 6001. Don't hesitate to call our maternity liaison on 03 9418 8300 for queries about your stay and for medical concerns, please speak with your doctor or call our birth suite.

We look forward to welcoming you to Epworth Freemasons.