

Please stay 2 metres apart

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2 metres (6ft or 3 steps)



Coronavirus - COVID-19  
Stay at home. Protect the  
NHS. Save lives!

**healthwatch**  
Brighton and Hove

Coronavirus (Covid-19)  
Maternity and pregnancy  
Information for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic

Should you have any questions or require further information please contact us by email: [office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)

We are pleased to present information on maternity and pregnancy from [Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group](#) and [Brighton and Hove Maternity Voices Partnership](#)

### Brighton and Hove Maternity Voices Partnership: sources of information

[Brighton and Hove Maternity Voices Partnership](#) (BHMVP) are an NHS working partnership to help shape maternity services, formed of 1/3 parent representatives along with providers of maternity services. BHMVP hold bi-monthly meetings to discuss all aspects of maternity.

To help to shape services the Partnership have produced a questionnaire which can be found on their [Facebook](#) page (all responses are anonymous). If you would like to get involved or feed into the services please [contact us](#)

#### Sources of information

[Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology](#) and [Royal College of Midwives](#) [frequently asked questions](#) for maternity

#### NHS England:

[pregnancy and Coronavirus information](#)

[Information leaflet planning your birth](#)

[Information for New Born babies and Coronavirus](#)

[Information Looking after yourself whilst pregnant and Coronavirus](#)

[Short Film from NHS England](#) on changes to maternity services during coronavirus

[Website](#) and [Facebook](#) page for Maternity Services in Brighton and Hove

[Birth Pool information](#) for birthing in a pool in Brighton and Hove

[Maternity Services](#) who to contact

[Sussex Support for Mental Health](#)

Other charities who support pregnancy and beyond

[Kickscout](#)

[AIMSUK](#)

[Birth rights](#)

[Sands](#)

[Antenatal Results and Choices](#)



### Infant Feeding support:

[Midwifery specialist infant feeding](#)

[Breast Feeding Brighton and Hove Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust](#)

[Brighton Breast Feeding Drop In](#)

## Answers to frequently asked questions

### Are antenatal appointments happening as normal?

There are several changes, with some appointments not going ahead and others being undertaken by phone or video conference. There are some which remain face to face to enable a physical examination and blood tests to be taken. Please see your local Trust website or ask your midwife for further information.

### Can I bring someone with me when I attend a scan?

Unfortunately, in order to observe social distancing guidance, only those who are pregnant are able to attend scan appointments. However, your partner/ friend/ family member can wait in the car park so that you have someone close by. They can be invited in to be with you at the end of the scan in the event of you receiving difficult news.

### What should I do if I'm worried about my baby's movements?

Your midwife is there to answer any questions and support you with any concerns. Please don't hesitate to contact them. Top tip: if you haven't eaten anything for a while, have something substantial to eat and a cold drink and then lie down on your left side with your hands on your tummy. If your baby's movements aren't as you would expect, please contact your midwife.

### Can I have a home birth in Sussex?

Unfortunately two of the Trusts in Sussex (Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust) have made the difficult decision to temporarily suspend home birth services, however midwifery led care in a 'home from home' environment is available at those hospitals. This is being kept regularly under review and any changes to this situation will be communicated via your local hospital.

### Are there any changes in the hospital as a result of Coronavirus?

Most hospitals have green and red zones. The maternity wards and clinics are within the green zones. Your local Trust will have uploaded a film on their website or social media account to show you a virtual tour of the hospital, including what staff will look like in their PPE. Other maternity service users have found these really helpful; as one new parent said this week, "I know we cannot see the smiles behind the masks, but we can tell you're smiling".



### Will I be tested for Covid-19?

Guidance is changing regularly and it is likely that this will shortly be happening for all those admitted to the hospital as an inpatient so please check your local Trust website or ask your midwife for further information.

### Can my partner accompany me if I am in labour?

Unfortunately it will not be possible for your partner to stay with you whilst you are attending the antenatal clinic or postnatal ward due to social distancing guidance. One birth partner, who is free of Covid-19 symptoms, can join you once you are in active labour and have moved to the labour ward as you will then be in a single room. Further information about when you are in active labour and how long your partner can stay with you after the birth can be found on the Trust's websites. Your birth partner can attend the hospital with you and wait outside of the Triage area until you are in active labour. Once you have been assessed, you can sit outside of the ward with your birth partner, if you wish to do so, until you are in active labour. Your birthing partner cannot be swapped for another family member or friend during labour.

### Can my partner accompany me for my C-birth?

You are advised that for a pre-booked C-section, you should come alone initially. Your birth partner can attend the hospital with you and wait outside of the Triage area until you are called down to Theatre. Once you have been checked in, you can sit outside of the ward with your birth partner, if you wish to do so, until you are called down to Theatre or you can wait on the ward and your partner can join you when the C-section is due to start (the staff will help ensure your partner is notified in time)

### Can I have visitors whilst I am on the postnatal ward?

Visiting restrictions are in place as a result of Coronavirus - please see your local Trust website or ask your midwife for further information. Each Trust is prioritising discharge so that you can go home as quickly as it is safe for you and the baby to do so after you have given birth.

### Can I breastfeed if I have Covid-19?

Yes, evidence suggests it is unlikely that Covid-19 would be transmitted through breastfeeding. It is still appropriate to implement hygiene measures, such as washing your hands regularly with soap and water and wearing a medical mask, if possible, to reduce the possibility of droplets with Covid-19 being spread to the infant. Feeding support is available virtually and by telephone from both midwives and health visitors.

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**Where can I find out about local support groups?**

Your midwife will be able to signpost you to local support groups, but your local Maternity Voices Partnership social media account may also provide some helpful pointers.