

COVID-19 and Participants in Care (Support people and Birth partners)

We ask all pregnant women to name one person to actively participate in her care.

This includes during labour, birth and the time after birth, with your baby, while you remain in the birthing room.

Your support person must follow COVID-19 safety rules.

Does a support person need to have their COVID-19 vaccine?

No.

What does your support person need to do to attend the birth?

- Always contact the birthing unit before coming into the hospital. They must let the staff know if they have COVID-19 or are a COVID-19 close contact.
- All support persons will be screened. This includes asking questions about COVID-19 symptoms.
- We will give them instructions about where to go and what to do when they arrive at the hospital.

What if my support person is COVID-19 positive or tests positive during screening?

If they are well and have no COVID-19 symptoms, they can still support you.

NSW Health has made an Exemption to the Public Health (COVID-19 Self Isolation) Order (No 4) 2021.

The exemption means a person who is COVID-19 positive can attend a hospital to provide care and support for you during labour, birth and immediately after birth.

You must give informed consent for a COVID-19 positive support person (exempt person) to be your participant in care. We will write this in your medical record.

A participant in care (support person) is someone who provides physical care and/or emotional support during labour and birth.

Having a trusted support person improves your safety and wellbeing during labour and birth.

What your COVID-19 positive support person needs to do



Call us before coming to hospital



Bring some food and drinks



Wear PPE as instructed



Wash their hands



Follow staff instructions



Stay in the birthing room and go straight home after the birth.

What will it mean for me and my baby if my support person is COVID-19 positive?

For the first week, your baby will need to be checked closely for signs of illness or infection.

You and your baby will be considered close contacts and will have to isolate as per government rules.

You will not be able to have other family members visit you and your baby while isolating.

If you get COVID-19 and are too unwell to care for your baby, your baby may be moved to:

- a special care nursery
- home to a suitable carer
- to a single room in the ward with another carer.

If you have COVID-19 are well enough, your baby will stay with you at your bedside in hospital.

What else should we know?

When deciding to have a support person for the birth, think carefully about you and your baby's health risk.

We suggest you choose an alternative support person in case the first person cannot be there.

If you need to be taken to an operating theatre, your COVID-19 positive support person may not be able to go with you.

After the birth of your baby, your support person will have to leave the hospital. They will not be able to return.

We will help you talk to loved ones via video call while you and baby stay in hospital.



Would you like more information?

Please speak to your doctor or midwife about your situation and what matters to you.

You can ask questions and take time to consider your options.

More detailed information is on this website:

nsw.gov.au/covid-19/stay-safe/advice-high-risk-groups/pregnant-and-new-parents

Birth Suite Numbers



**The Tweed Hospital
Birth Suite**
07 5506 7490

**Lismore Base Hospital
Birth Suite**
02 6620 7450

**Grafton Base Hospital
Birth Suite**
02 6641 8490

Midwifery Group Practice
Call your Midwife on the number given to you.