

Birthing with COVID-19

Frequently asked questions

Do you test everyone for COVID-19?

Yes – women who come into the Day Assessment Unit, Labour Ward and those having a caesarean section all have a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). Your support person/s will also be required to have a RAT.

I've tested for positive COVID-19, where will I have my baby?

Women with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 are able to birth in dedicated rooms in Labour Ward at Mackay Base Hospital. This is the case as long as there are no other factors that would normally result in transfer to a tertiary hospital.

Your mode of birth will not be influenced by COVID-19 unless urgent delivery is indicated. Your choice of feeding is supported and breastfeeding is still recommended even if you have COVID-19.

Where will I stay after birth and will my baby stay with me?

Mums who have COVID-19 are able to room in with their babies in a dedicated section of the Women's Health Unit as long as baby does not need to be in the Special Care Nursery. Babies will be in an incubator called a Giraffe Isolette to limit their infection risk (we know the virus is spread in the air) but they are able to come out for feeding, cuddles, nappy changes, baths etc, just like any other baby in a bassinette beside their mum.

If I have COVID-19 can I visit my baby in the Special Care Nursery?

No. It is important that premature and other unwell newborn babies in the Special Care Nursery are not exposed to a visitor who is COVID-19 positive. All efforts will be made to bring the baby to the mother's room for visits if it is safe to do so.

I'm unvaccinated, can I have my baby at Mackay Base Hospital?

Yes, everyone can access care at our hospitals.

How many support people can I have for birth?

You are able to have two support people, one of which may be unvaccinated. While we can allow an unvaccinated partner to attend (provided they follow all staff instructions regarding Personal Protective Equipment), we do require that any secondary support person be vaccinated, to limit risk to our staff.

Can I have a support person during my caesarean?

Yes, you may have one support person unless a general anaesthetic is required. This person may be unvaccinated and will have to wear PPE to limit the risk of transmission to others in the room.

My support person has COVID-19 or is a close contact of a positive case, can they attend the birth?

Yes, but they may attend the birth but will need to wear appropriate PPE to protect our staff. They may not visit the ward or nursery – this is to ensure other mothers and babies are not unnecessarily exposed to any risk.

Can I have visitors after the birth?

Visitors to the ward and Special Care Nursery must be double vaccinated – this includes the partner of the birthing mother. Many of our rooms are doubles and we need to limit risk to the other new mother and her baby who may share the room.

My partner has COVID-19 or is a close contact of a positive case, can they visit ward or Special Care Nursery?

No, they may not. This is to ensure other mothers and babies are not unnecessarily exposed to any risk.

Antenatal**Can I bring a support person to my antenatal appointment?**

We ask that this not happen. If there is some reason you feel this is absolutely necessary please discuss this in advance of your arrival.

Can a support person attend my ultrasound scan?

One vaccinated support person is permitted. If there are extenuating circumstances where you need more than one support person please call the contact number on your appointment letter in advance. Our preference is children do not attend these appointments due.