

General Notices - Netcare

NOTICE TO ALL EXPECTANT PARENTS

Parents who are expecting a baby in the COVID-19 pandemic may be understandably anxious about any additional risks this could potentially pose for mother and baby.

Within Netcare hospitals, additional precautions have been implemented to limit the number of persons entering our hospitals, in order to minimise the risk of exposure to patients in hospital as well as to nurses, doctors and others working in our hospitals. These precautions include the suspension of visiting of patients, with a few exceptions.

The following measures are specifically applicable to our maternity units, in order to protect mothers and babies.

PRIVATE ROOM BOOKINGS

In the case of mothers-to-be who have booked a private room for their delivery and are accommodated in a private room at the time of the delivery (given that envisaged and actual delivery dates are not always the same), a birth partner (father or another person) will be able to attend the delivery and to remain with the mother for the duration of her stay in hospital. The birth partner will not be able to leave and return to visit as this increases the risk of infection. This is on condition that the birth partner have had no COVID-19 exposure or symptoms and accepts the infection prevention controls that have put in place to minimise the risks to their baby or others in the maternity unit.

GENERAL WARD BOOKINGS

In the case of mothers who are not accommodated in a private room, i.e. who are sharing a room or ward with other mother(s), a birth partner will be permitted to attend the delivery and to stay with the mother until she is transferred to her ward, provided that the birth partner have had no COVID-19 exposure or symptoms and accepts the infection prevention controls in place.

GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

Please note that only one parent at a time is allowed to visit their newborn baby in the nursery or neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). This means that either the mother

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may visit the baby for the duration of the baby's stay in the nursery or NICU, or the father may visit the baby for the duration of the baby's stay. This is on condition that the person visiting has had no COVID-19 exposure and accepts that very strict infection prevention controls that have been put in place to minimise the risks to their baby or other babies and parents. For long-stay neonatal admissions, an exception can be granted by the hospital general manager, as authorised by the regional director.

We understand that the birth of a new baby is an occasion in which the whole family would like to share. However, grandparents and other family members will not be permitted to visit while the mother is in hospital. While we know how important emotional support is at this time, it really is crucial that we limit contact as far as possible for the safety of all concerned.

Bringing their new baby home is a very special time for parents. We encourage new parents to carefully follow the National Institute for Communicable Diseases' advice on home and hand hygiene once mother and baby are home. Even when at home and within the immediate family, it is essential that these precautions and cough and sneeze etiquette are strictly followed. Mothers should take special care of themselves and look after their health and well-being, as this is very important for their baby's well-being too.

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