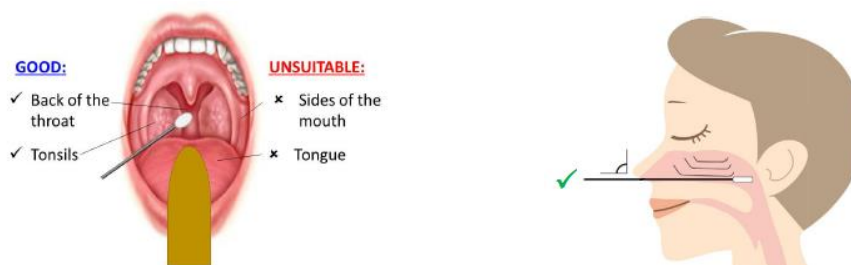


Information on Routine Testing for COVID-19 for women attending Saint Mary's Hospital

At Saint Mary's Hospital our priority is to keep you and your baby safe. Following national guidance from Public Health England we are now testing **all women who require admission** to the hospital. This includes women who have symptoms of Covid-19 (such as a cough, temperature, problems with breathing, or loss of taste or smell), as well as women who have no symptoms of Covid-19.

What does the test involve?

Swabs are taken from the back of your throat, near your tonsils, and also from your nasal passages (nose). It is important the swab is taken correctly and it may be slightly uncomfortable for a short period of time while the samples are obtained. Swabs will be sent for either **standard** testing or **rapid** testing in the laboratory by a virologist.



What happens if I have symptoms of coronavirus?

You will be tested for Covid-19 if you have any symptoms of coronavirus such as a high temperature, persistent cough or shortness of breath. On admission to hospital you will be given a surgical face mask to wear and shown to a designated room. Your observations will be taken along with a swab which will be sent for **rapid** testing; this means we should get your result in around 4-6 hours.

What happens if I do not have any symptoms of coronavirus?

You will still be tested for coronavirus as it has been found that people may still have the virus without showing any symptoms (asymptomatic).

A **rapid** test will be sent if you

- Attend hospital and are already in labour and the neck of your womb (your cervix) is less than 6cm dilated
- If you are admitted to the antenatal ward for further observation
- If you are re-admitted after you baby is born

A **standard** test will be sent if you

- Are having an elective caesarean section, or having your labour induced. This swab will be taken before your admission so that your results are available when you are admitted. If you have had a swab taken and have returned home you will need to self-isolate (stay at home and only have contact with others that live in your household) until you come back to the hospital.

Results of the standard test are usually available within 24-36 hours.

If you have an **elective caesarean or induction of labour** booked:

- Please self-isolate for 14 days prior to your elective caesarean section or induction of labour OR up to the date if your admission is less than 14 days. You should stay at home (apart from any clinical appointments), have no visitors to your house, and try to remain separate from others within the house.



You should also consider the use of a facemask in unavoidable communal areas of the house. This also applies to the person who will be coming in to support you during labour and/or birth.

What happens while I wait for the results of the test?

Your maternity care will be provided in the usual way while you wait for the results of your test.

If you have any symptoms of Covid-19

- You will be cared for in a single room while waiting for your test result. You and any support person with you will be asked to wear a facemask and remain in the single room. We will provide refreshments for you and any support person with you.

If you are in labour

- You will be cared for in a single room in the usual way for labour care.

If you have come in for induction of labour and have no symptoms of Covid-19

- You will be cared for either in a side room or in a bay with other women awaiting results. If you are in a shared bay you will be asked to wear a facemask and keep the curtains around your bed areas closed until the result of the test is received. Any support person with you will also be asked to wear a surgical facemask. We will ask you and your support person to remain by the bedside as much as possible.

If you have been admitted to the antenatal ward or postnatal ward and have no symptoms of Covid-19

- You may be cared for in a bay with other women awaiting results. If you are in a shared bay you and your support person will be asked to wear a facemask and keep the curtains around your bed areas closed until the result of the test is received. Any support person with you will also be asked to wear a surgical facemask. We will ask you and your visitor/support person to remain by the bedside as much as possible.

If you have been readmitted in the postnatal period and have no symptoms of Covid-19

- You will be cared for in a single room.

What happens if my swab result shows I am positive for Covid-19?

Your maternity care will continue to be provided in the usual way. Staff will need to wear additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for certain procedures such as caesarean sections. In the antenatal area you may be cared for in a shared bay with other women who have tested positive. You will be asked to keep the curtains closed and you and any visitor will be asked to wear a surgical face mask. In labour and on the postnatal ward you will be cared for in a single room.

What happens if my swab result shows I am negative for Covid-19?

Your maternity care will continue to be provided in the usual way. If your swab result is negative you may be moved to a shared bay with other women who have also tested negative. You and any visitor will no longer be asked to wear a surgical facemask. In labour you will be cared for in a single room.

What happens if I do not want to be tested for Covid-19?

If you choose not to be tested for Covid-19 the reasons for this will be discussed with you. If you still choose not to be tested you will be cared for as if you had tested positive for Covid-19. Your support person will still be able to be with you during labour. If your baby needs to be admitted to the neonatal unit you and any support person will not be able to visit your baby on the unit.

What else do I need to know?

All staff will be wearing PPE when caring for you regardless of the result of your test. Please remember social distancing rules while you are in hospital and the importance of good hand hygiene for you and any support person or visitor that is with you.