

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Patient Information

Information on Testing for COVID-19 for Women Admitted to Saint Mary's Hospital Maternity Units

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.

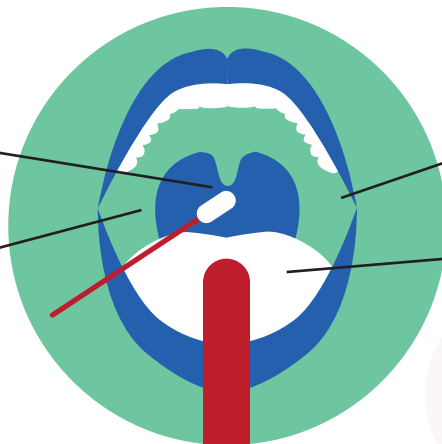
What does the test involve?

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.

Correct

Back
of the
throat

Tonsils



Incorrect

Sides
of the
mouth

Tongue



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 or loss of taste. 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.

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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
- Remain an inpatient for seven days or longer (you will be re-swabbed every 7 days if you remain in hospital)
- Results of the standard test are usually available within 24-36 hours.

If you have an elective caesarean booked

We recommend that you self-isolate for 14 days prior to your elective caesarean section OR up to the date, if 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 maintain good hand hygiene and consider the use of a facemask if you need to go out.

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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.

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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 labour and on the postnatal ward you will be cared for in a single room. You will not be required to wear a facemask while you are in labour but any support people with you will be required to wear a facemask when you are in labour.

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 unless moving away from the bedside or if unable to maintain social distancing measures. In labour you will be cared for in a single room and you will not be required to wear a facemask when you are in labour.

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. We recommend that if you are being admitted to hospital you have a test for Covid-19. This will help support the reduction of Covid-19 transmission and keep you and others safe. 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.

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 measures that you can take to reduce social interaction between people. Social distancing practices have been introduced across Saint Mary's Hospital and we have signs to help you follow these. Measures include spaced out chairs in clinics, Perspex screens at reception desks, visual markings on floors and extra signs in busy areas including main entrances, corridors and lifts.

We are carrying out extra cleaning activities across Saint Mary's Hospital, including communal areas, to help reduce the spread of infections. If you have any concerns about cleanliness during your stay or visit, please mention this to a staff member.

Please remember the importance of good hand hygiene for you and any support person or visitor that is with you. This includes washing your hands with soap and water after using the toilet, before meals and meal preparation and after coughing and sneezing (do this into a tissue and dispose of the tissue before washing your hands).

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Information about wearing a mask

How to wear a face mask properly is critical to how effective it will and disposing of the mask after use is equally as important.

- The first thing to remember is that you must wash your hands/use hand sanitiser before putting on the mask and after you take off the mask.
- Ensure your nose and mouth is covered by the mask at all times. Try to ensure that it fits snugly and that there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- You might be wondering which side is meant to be on the outside of some masks. The general rule is that the coloured side or the side with the boldest colour goes on the outside.
- Try not to touch the mask while using it but if you are aware you have touched your mask please wash your hands with soap or rub your hands with an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- You should dispose of the single use mask after use.
- When removing the mask, remove it by the ear loops do not touch the front of the mask. If you are not re-using the mask throw it into a closed bin and then wash your hands with soap or rub your hands with an alcohol-based sanitizer.



For further advice on Covid:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid19/people-at-higher-risk/pregnancy-and-coronavirus/

www.rcog.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guideline/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/