



Q&A for Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Pediatricians

Q: Why are visitor restrictions different for maternity care areas?

Cone Health is restricting visitors for the duration of the patient's hospitalization. The birth of a child involves the mother, considered the patient, and a birthing partner. These are unprecedented times and we are making the exception to allow a birthing partner to be a part of the patient unit. No other guests will be allowed in our Women's & Children's Center at Moses Cone Hospital and at Alamance Regional.

Q: Are credentialed doulas allowed to support their existing patients?

We acknowledge the value these doula partnerships offer our care teams and many birthing families in our communities. Each laboring mother is allowed one birthing partner of the patient's choosing for her entire hospitalization.

Q: Are visitor restrictions different for hospitalized children?

Pediatric patients (infants and children under 17 years of age), such as those in the Children's Unit, Pediatric ICU and NICU, will be allowed two visitors (parents or legal guardians)

Q: Are pregnant women at an increased risk for COVID-19?

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) is monitoring closely the coronavirus pandemic. With the limited information available, data does not indicate pregnant women are at an increased risk. However, pregnant women are known to be at greater risk for respiratory infections like flu. With that in mind, expectant mothers are considered an at-risk population for COVID-19, according to ACOG.

Q: Are newborns at an increased risk for COVID-19?

A limited sample of COVID-19 data with newborns indicates the virus is not transferred to the infant during pregnancy. However, postpartum separation is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). As a result Cone Health recommends and strongly encourages temporary separation of moms and babies who test positive for COVID-19 or are awaiting results to rule out COVID-19 based on CDC guidelines.

Q: If you have a suspected case of COVID-19, is the NICU couplet care room an option?

No. If either patient is considered at-risk for having COVID-19, the Women's & Children's Center at Moses Cone Hospital will not use the NICU couplet care rooms for that family.

Q: Cone Health is urging that elective procedures be postponed. What is considered elective for women's and children's service line?

NOT ELECTIVE: Obstetric procedures, even those with an element of choice on timing, are not considered elective. **Circumcisions** are considered elective procedures, however, these do not deplete blood products and other resources, which is the spirit in which the COVID-19 postponement of elective procedures was intended. Therefore, circumcisions will be allowed.

ELECTIVE: Postpartum tubal ligations are considered elective and should be postponed.

COVID-19
(CORONAVIRUS)



Q&A for Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Pediatricians

Cone Health supports as much as possible the medical care team working with the patient's individual needs to address timing during these unprecedented times. We seek the support of our medical care team in preserving needed resources throughout our crisis response to COVID-19.

Q: How does COVID-19 impact breastfeeding?

Breastmilk is safe for your baby – even if the mother has tested positive for COVID-19. We suggest the mother pump her milk and have a healthy family member feed the baby to protect the baby from getting the virus.

If a COVID-19+ mother decides to breastfeed after discharge, we suggest proper protective equipment be worn and hand hygiene be performed before and after feeding the infant.

Q: Should we urge patients to avoid baby showers and large gatherings?

Yes. As has been recommended for all citizens in our communities, gatherings of 10 or more should be avoided – pregnant or not. Seek creative options for “hosting” baby showers through electronic means that honor the request for social distancing during this time of heightened awareness.

Q: Should patients miss their prenatal appointments?

No. Prenatal visits are NOT elective. While we want to limit contact and exposure, prenatal care is vital right now. Contact your physician's office if you have concerns about your visits. We are limiting outpatient office visits to the patient and one guest in order to reduce the potential for exposure.

Q: What if a pregnant woman feels sick? Should she miss her prenatal visit then?

A pregnant woman experiencing coronavirus-like symptoms (i.e., cough, fever, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal issues) should contact her pregnancy care provider by phone. Her medical professional can best determine whether she should use a video visit or possibly go to a collection site to be tested for COVID-19. Contacting her primary care provider or her pregnancy care provider is her first step.

Q: What can I do about childbirth education? All the classes are cancelled.

The Women's & Children's Centers will offer online learning to support mothers on their journey. We currently offer Understanding Childbirth, Understanding Breastfeeding and Understanding Newborn Care as an online class. Please visit our website, www.conehealthybaby.com/todo, to register for an online class.

Q: How can I keep from getting COVID-19?

COVID-19
(CORONAVIRUS)



Q&A for Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Pediatricians

Together, we can reduce the risk of exposure to the virus and help you and your family remain healthy and safe. One of the best ways to protect yourself is to wash your hands frequently using soap and water. Also, you should avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, avoid physical contact with others and practice social distancing.

Q: How are employees being informed about what to do?

Cone Health leaders receive a daily COVID-19 update and share relevant information with their teams. This is a time when health care professionals are called on to lead within our community. We appreciate our staff's engagement with our COVID-19 updates and encourage them to share best practices on reducing the spread of the virus with our patients and community. We are prepared to provide the exceptional COVID-19 care and coordination our community needs, expects and deserves.

Q: Who's in charge of this issue at Cone Health?

The leadership structure and process established to address COVID-19 includes Chief Physician Executive Bruce Swords, MD; Infection Prevention Medical Director Cynthia Snider, MD; and Infection Prevention Interim Director Sara Wall, MSN, RN, CIC, CSPDT. A team of Cone Health experts reflecting a broad spectrum of our workforce is meeting daily to evaluate new information we receive about COVID-19 and to adapt policies and practices accordingly.