



# MATERNITY HANDBOOK

A guide for expecting mums  
and families during the  
COVID-19 Pandemic

[www.svphm.org.au](http://www.svphm.org.au)



ST VINCENT'S  
PRIVATE HOSPITAL  
MELBOURNE

## THIS BOOKLET HAS INFORMATION ABOUT KEEPING YOU SAFE FROM INFECTION

# Five ways you can reduce the spread of infection

Like flu viruses, there are some simple things you can do to keep yourself and other people safe. The best prevention against COVID-19 is **HYGIENE**, so make sure you:

1.  Wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds after touching objects and surfaces.

2.  Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser regularly.

3.  Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or cough into your flexed elbow.

4.  Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

5.  If you are concerned that another person has not cleaned their hands properly, please let a staff member know.

## TELL YOUR MIDWIFE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE DEVELOPING FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS SUCH AS COUGH, FEVER AND DIFFICULTY BREATHING

### Staying safe in hospital

We are keeping you safe from COVID-19 in a number of ways:

- We have single room patient accommodation available and we use strict infection control precautions in all areas of our hospitals
- All staff are trained in preventing the spread of infection. We continue to maintain high-levels of hygiene, such as cleaning our hands, disinfecting equipment, and using protective masks, gloves and gowns when needed.
- We will continue to check your health and wellbeing during your stay
- We no longer accept flowers, gifts or food deliveries to our hospitals at this time in order to better protect our patients and staff.

We now have a dedicated maternity phone number:  
Fitzroy (03) 9411 7634 • Werribee (03) 9218 8292

# Maternity Q&A

## What is St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne's current policy regarding partners/support persons?

Currently, one person (partner or support person) is allowed to accompany a maternity patient. They can attend the birth and also remain for the entirety of the maternity patients stay.

## Can my partner or support person leave and come back to the hospital?

Yes, however, we do recommend limiting comings and goings as much as possible. The partner or support person will also have to undergo a temperature check, answer screening questions and provide their contact details to be permitted entry.

## Can my partner or support person be interchangeable?

To minimise as much risk as possible, your chosen partner or support person cannot be interchangeable. The individual accompanying you during birth may also accompany you during your postnatal stay – it cannot be a different person. We hope you understand that the reasoning behind this is to keep our mums and bubs as safe as possible and allow us to monitor and support the individuals who are on our maternity wards.

## Can I have visitors?

Unfortunately, no. We are restricting visitor access on our maternity wards. The only additional persons permitted on our maternity wards beside you and your new bub is your one chosen support person. We are aware that this is a difficult reality; however, our fantastic team of midwives and nurses are here to support you.

We recommend to our mums that they utilise the use of virtual communication applications during this time, such as FaceTime, WhatsApp, Skype or Facebook Messenger. If you do not have a device that supports these services, please let our staff know, and we will go out of our way to make sure you can communicate with your family and friends during your stay.

We have also increased the availability of our **Perinatal Emotional Wellbeing Midwife**. Michelle Cambrey works Monday, Wednesday and Friday and offers consultations over the phone, via FaceTime and WhatsApp, and in-person on our postnatal ward. For more info, you can email [Michelle.Cambrey@svha.org.au](mailto:Michelle.Cambrey@svha.org.au)

## Can my student midwife attend my birth?

Unfortunately, we are unable to have student midwives attend our maternity wards for the same reason we are unable to have visitors.

## Am I able to visit my baby if they need to be admitted into the Special Care Nursery?

Yes. Both you and your partner or support person can visit your baby in the event they are admitted into the special care nursery.

### **What if I am due to deliver, and my partner/support person or I am COVID-19 Positive?**

We have already established response plans in the event a mum tests positive to COVID-19. These plans pertain to admission and the full length of stay for mums who are exhibiting signs of COVID-19 on arrival and mums who have tested positive before arrival.

Our maternity wards have dedicated rooms that will be utilised if any mum tests positive to COVID-19. Our staff are trained in several scenarios and will follow best practice. Our priority is to keep mum, baby and other inpatients safe.

Partners or support persons who test positive to COVID-19 are unable to attend the hospital or birth. We understand the idea of this occurring can be very anxiety-provoking.

We recommend that mums and couples consider an alternative person that can support mum during the birth if their partner or support person cannot attend due to showing symptoms or testing positive to COVID-19.

### **How is SVPHM keeping their patients and staff safe during this time?**

Our team has been incredibly proactive in ensuring the safety of our patients and staff. We will continue to take any measure necessary to do this. At the entry point of our hospital, we have put in place a screening process. This process requires anyone that enters to answer a series of questions, have their temperature taken and also sign in (receiving a name badge on entry).

Staff are also required to have their temperature checked before they commence their shifts.

In addition, all staff have been required to reorientate themselves with safety measures regarding PPE and pandemic responses. We have quickly established clear guidelines, protocols and performed scenario simulations, to help prepare us in the unlikely event that a patient tests positive to Covid-19 in our care.

### **Will elective Caesarians still go ahead?**

Yes, all elective Caesarians will still go ahead.

### **Are any of the services provided during my stay affected by COVID-19?**

The only service we are unable to offer is the night settling service. Newborns will now stay with their mums in their postnatal rooms but don't worry; our midwife team will be there and able to provide in-room settling support whenever required.

### **Is the Fitzroy Lactation Clinic still operating?**

Yes. Our Lactation Clinic operates 9am – 3pm Monday to Friday. It is available to mums until baby is 12 months of age. To make an appointment post discharge, please call 9411 7797.

Our Lactation Consultants are also still available on our maternity floors 6 days a week, 7.30am – 3.30pm.

### **Can I still stay at the Park Hyatt?**

At this point in time, the Family Retreat Program at the Park Hyatt Hotel is unavailable. This allows us to minimise as much risk as possible to our mums and bubs and also reduces your unnecessary exposure to individuals outside of our hospital.

### **Have there been any changes to the Embrace Program?**

All patients on the Embrace program will continue to see the midwife at the normal intervals to ensure things such as fetal heart, urinalysis and blood pressure can still be checked regularly. During their visits we ask that they come alone and the duration has been reduced to allow for only clinical checks.

### **Is SVPHM allowing flower or food delivery?**

SVPHM are no longer accepting deliveries of flowers or gifts for patients. Additionally, food deliveries such as Uber Eats, Menulog and Deliveroo will not be permitted into our hospitals at this time.

### **Can I still attend a hospital tour?**

All hospital tours have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. Via our website, you can access a virtual tour of our maternity wards.

### **Am I still able to attend Child Birth Education Classes?**

Our Childbirth and Early Parenting Education Class has been transferred to an online format within our newly developed Childbirth Education Portal. Within this portal, you can access:

- Childbirth Education Video Series
- Breastfeeding Education Videos
- Coming to SVPHM Maternity Arrival Tour
- Information on our dedicated Perinatal Emotional Wellbeing Midwife and online resources

### **How do I access the SVPHM Childbirth Education Portal?**

Once you have finalised your maternity booking at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne, our team will send you a maternity pack via email/mail. Within that pack, you receive a link to book into classes. We suggest booking a class now for when you are approx. 32 weeks. We will send information on how to access the childbirth education portal a couple of weeks before the date of your booked class. Even though you are not attending these classes in person, booking in helps us record who needs Childbirth Education and ensure we get you the right information as soon as possible. If you are having problems booking in or would like more information please email via [childbirthed@svha.org.au](mailto:childbirthed@svha.org.au)

### **Will my 32-week Maternity Preadmission appointment still go ahead?**

Your 32-week Maternity Preadmission appointments will still go ahead; however, to minimise the risk, we will be holding these appointments over the phone.

### **What will my 32-week Maternity Preadmission phone call involve?**

This 30 minute phone call gives you and your partner:

- An opportunity to ask any questions about the hospital and your stay.
- Review your maternity history and health information.

### **I've never been to SVPHM before. How will I know where to go when I am in labour?**

For many mums, the first time you step foot into our hospital will be when you are in labour. We have created a maternity tour for both sites ([Fitzroy](#) or [Werribee](#)) to combat any confusion on where to go when coming to hospital for the first time. This is available on our website and within our [CBE portal](#).