



COVID-19 FAQs: Preparing for Childbirth at Sibley Memorial Hospital

What is the hospital doing to ensure it is clean for a safe delivery?

The hospital uses cleaning materials that are government regulated in all public and private spaces. We follow the CDC guidelines for disinfecting all surfaces to ensure your health and safety.

How do I attend a childbirth class?

Sibley is offering some childbirth educational opportunities online. To learn more, visit events.sibley.org.

What symptoms could be a sign of COVID-19 in a pregnant woman?

COVID-19 symptoms include:

- Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Unexplained loss of taste or smell
- Headache
- Diarrhea

All patients should call prior to coming to the hospital if they have symptoms or if they have tested positive for COVID-19 by an outside facility.

What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?

If you have a fever or any kind of respiratory difficulty, such as coughing or shortness of breath, call your doctor and explain your symptoms over the phone before going to the doctor's office, urgent care facility or emergency room. If you have a medical emergency such as severe shortness of breath, call 911 and let them know about your symptoms.

Will I be tested for COVID-19 before delivery?

Due to the potential for asymptomatic women in labor to be COVID-19-positive, each woman who is admitted for delivery will receive a rapid COVID-19 test. The care team will follow our COVID-19 protocol and will resume non-COVID-19 guidelines if the test comes back negative. Failure to identify COVID-19 in asymptomatic women in labor presents a high risk for transmitting the virus to others, including the newborn baby.



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COVID-19 FAQs: Preparing for Childbirth at Sibley Memorial Hospital *continued*

If I go into labor, where do I enter the hospital?

Patients should call their OB provider prior to coming to the hospital to be admitted. Patients can enter Sibley through the main entrance at Building A or Building B; all patients and visitors will be screened for symptoms. From there, patients should go directly to Labor and Delivery on the 3rd floor of Building B, where they will be admitted. OB patients may pre-register with their doctor or midwife's office in advance of their due date. For extra precautions, on the Labor and Delivery Unit, providers will wear masks and eye protection.

What is the visitor policy when I deliver?

The safety of our patients and staff members is our highest priority. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, only one care partner will be permitted for labor, delivery and the duration of the birth parent's hospital stay. It must be the same care partner throughout the stay. One certified or registered doula will be permitted for labor and delivery and one care partner OR one certified or registered doula is allowed in the operating room during surgical delivery. **All doulas providing care at Sibley Memorial Hospital are required to show proof of their COVID-19 vaccination when entering the Labor and Delivery and Family Centered Care units.** Upon check-in on the unit, a member of our health care team will verify and document their vaccination status. Please let your doula know that they will need to show one of the following options and their photo ID to demonstrate proof of vaccination:

- A physical Centers for Disease Control (CDC) vaccination card
- A digital copy/photo of a CDC vaccination card
- A COVID-19 verification app such as VaxYes or CLEAR

In the Special Care Nursery, two adult caregivers are permitted for each patient. Our [visitor restrictions guidelines](#) provide more detailed information.

All family members or visitors entering Sibley will be screened for COVID-19 when they enter the facility and will not be able to stay if they have symptoms. We understand that this policy is not ideal or preferred. In the future, we will return to a more patient-focused visitor policy. We appreciate your patience and understanding, and our care teams are here to support you during these visits.

Can my family wait in the lobby or other area of the hospital during delivery?

Other family members or friends will not be permitted to enter the facility or to wait in lobbies or common areas such as the cafeteria.

Can my partner stay with me after delivery?

Yes, you may have one visitor stay with you with minimal reentry.

Will I be separated from my baby after birth?

We encourage skin-to-skin and rooming in for patients. However, if a patient tests positive for COVID-19 prior to delivery, our hospital will follow current CDC/AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) guidelines related to separating mother and baby to prevent transmission of the virus.

How should I prepare when I return home?

When you and your little one return home, stay home as much as possible. Instead of having visitors come to you, call friends and family or visit by video. If you have to go out, you should also practice social and physical distancing — stay at least 6 feet away from others in public places. Wash your hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds.

