

NICU Parent Exposure to COVID or COVID Positive Result - FAQ

Learning that you or your partner have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 can be very stressful and bring up many questions about visiting your baby in the NICU. Please know that our goal is to have you visit with your baby as soon as it is safe to do so. This handout contains answers to questions that you may have.

Key Definitions:

Exposure: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines an exposed person as someone who has had close contact (within 6 feet) for a total of 15 minutes to a person who has COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19.

Quarantine: If you might have been exposed to the virus. Quarantine keeps someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others.

Isolation: If COVID-19 positive, even if you don't have symptoms. Isolation separates people who are infected with the virus from others, even in their own home.

Exposure:

If you are exposed (see definition above) to someone else who has tested positive for COVID-19:

If you are exposed to a COVID-19 positive person, what happens next?

Call the NICU to notify your baby's nurse. Some information that you will want to provide includes the date you last had contact with the individual, when you last visited the NICU, whether you are experiencing any symptoms, and whether you are vaccinated.

You can still visit if you are asymptomatic, and will be asked to monitor signs and symptoms closely. If symptoms start, do not visit the NICU. Please call and update your baby's nurse.

If you have been exposed to someone who is COVID positive, should you be tested?

We cannot require you to get tested, but we can give you information about testing locations. You can also contact your medical provider for information.





What if you test positive for COVID?

You should isolate, regardless of vaccination status. You can be around others and visit the NICU after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving*

**Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.*

People who are severely ill with COVID-19 might need to stay home longer than 10 days and up to 20 days after symptoms first appeared.

How can you receive updates on your baby?

You are encouraged to call and check on your baby at any time. Your baby's doctor can also communicate with you via Telehealth or other forms of technology.

How can you bond with your baby when unable to visit?

We can schedule a time for us to use Facetime so that you and your partner can see your baby every day. If you are pumping, we encourage you to continue and have a healthy family member/friend bring in your milk. If you have other children, ask your baby's nurse to speak to a child life specialist or perinatal support coordinator who can provide great suggestions for ways that they can bond and connect with their sibling while at home.

What steps can you take at home to prevent passing on the virus to someone else?

Stay home, except to get medical care. Stay in one specific room as much as possible, take care of yourself, stay in touch with your doctor and wear a mask over your mouth and nose if you are sick and must be around other people or pets.

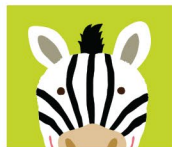
Will your baby be tested?

Yes, we will test your baby based on our newborn testing guidelines.

You came to visit your baby in the NICU and you screen positive for signs and symptoms with the screener. What happens next?

The screener will call the NICU to notify us and give you a COVID hotline number that you can call. Your baby's nurse or unit charge nurse will ask you some questions to try and gather more information, but we will have to ask you to go home due to the unknown cause of your symptoms. Based on the answers to your questions, we will make a decision in partnership with our Infection Preventionist and Neonatologist about future visitation. We realize this is very difficult, but your baby's safety is our top priority.





Other FAQ on Breastfeeding/Pumping

Can you continue to pump and supply breastmilk to your baby?

- Most definitely yes! Refer to the breastfeeding and pumping education you've received titled "[Breast milk guidance for NICU babies.](#)"

How can you get pumped milk to the hospital?

- Arrange for a healthy family member to pick up the pumped milk from your home and bring it to the hospital. You should not have contact with the healthy family member, so the milk should be placed outside of your home for pick up.
- The milk bottles should be placed in sealed plastic bag.
- Call your baby's nurse ahead of time to let them know that a family member is coming to drop off milk. Provide the designated family member with the NICU's main phone number so they can call when they've arrived at the hospital. We will meet the family member at the hospital entrance and can also provide them with pumping bottles and labels to give you.

References

- https://www.advocatehealth.com/covid-19-info/assets/documents/isolation-guidance/covid-isolation-and-deisolation_v3-5.26.2020.pdf
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>
- <https://www.advocatehealth.com/covid-19-info/assets/documents/additional-resources/covid-19-handout-for-nicu-families.pdf>
- <https://www.advocatehealth.com/covid-19-info/assets/documents/emergency-department-hospital/nicunewbornguidance.pdf>

