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Welcoming a new baby during COVID-19 - FAQ

1. Do I need to still bring my baby in for the 7-10 day check?

Possibly! We will consider this on a case by case basis. Please call when you arrive home from hospital so we can discuss and work out what is best for your situation.

The role of the 7-10 day newborn check is to assess your baby's health through examination and a weigh and measure. This is an opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have, discuss feeding, nappies, how you are recovering and your plans for immunisation.

We know that pre-COVID, the baby's weight and feeding is often monitored by the home visiting midwife. However it is likely that these visits will now be done via telehealth, and with the community health drop-in clinics closed we may need to weigh your baby here to ensure they are back to their birth weight.

We will also take into account how soon after birth you were discharged from hospital as this will influence when your baby needs their next examination.

2. What about the 6 week check and immunisations?

This appointment is recommended to continue to ensure that your baby is meeting milestones and gaining weight and involves discussing how things are going and examining them. It is important that we continue to provide immunisations to ensure that your baby and the community are protected from vaccine preventable diseases.

During these times of COVID-19 please be advised that we have plans in place to ensure the ongoing delivery of these appointments such as the option of a phone consult prior for history taking purposes to reduce the time spent in the practice.

We are also seeking your support in asking that:

- Only one adult accompanies a child to the immunisation appointment. Please avoid bringing extended family/carers to the appointment.
- Arrive at the allotted appointment time to reduce the number of people in the space at the same time.
- Practice social distancing and good hand hygiene at the appointment.

3. What about the 6 week check for mum? Should this still go ahead?

Yes. This is an important consult to allow us to check in on your recovery, identify any feeding concerns or mood changes and discuss contraception. The majority of this check can be done via telehealth rather than a face to face appointment - if this is your preference please let our reception staff know.

4. Ongoing checks and immunisations

Again the 4, 6, 12 and 18month check and immunisation appointments are recommended to continue.

5. What about COVID-19 in neonates and kids?

The good news is that neonates without comorbidities do not appear to be at an increased risk.

There are a small, but increasing number of case reports in children. So far data from China and Italy confirms that COVID-19 is much less severe in children than adults with critical illness very rare. It may be more serious in younger infants, but this picture is less clear due to the high number of other respiratory viral infections suffered by this age group which can be more serious (cases not due to COVID-19).

It is not yet known why there are so few children with confirmed COVID-19.

6. COVID-19 - what symptoms should I look for in my child?

The symptoms of coronavirus are similar to that of other respiratory illness and include fever, runny nose, sore throat and cough. It can also present with gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting. The symptoms usually lasted between one to two weeks.

It is thought that many children may have no symptoms at all (asymptomatic).

Importantly, children who are symptomatic or only mildly affected may play a role in transmission of COVID-19. It is yet unknown whether asymptomatic children can pass the infection on to others. It appears children may continue to excrete the virus through their faeces (poo) for several weeks after the symptoms of infection have passed, but the role of this excretion in viral transmission is not clear (it may just be viral particles rather than active virus). Regardless, hand hygiene remains of paramount importance in reducing spread.

If your baby or child has any of the above symptoms and you are concerned please call to organise an appointment.

>> if your baby is under 3 months and has a fever (temp >38) - needs to be seen ASAP <<

7. How can I protect my family?

- Ensure a good hand washing routine for everyone in your household.
- Use a tissue or the crook of your arm when you sneeze or cough (dispose of tissue carefully)
- Avoid close contact with others who are unwell
- Avoid greeting people by shaking hands or hugging and kissing
- Practice social distancing
- If your child is on medication ensure you have at least two weeks supply in case of quarantine or supply chain disruption

While it will not influence response to COVID-19 infection, it is also recommended that children 6 months and over undergo influenza vaccination

In order to provide continued high-quality service for our patients please ring ahead of your appointment if you, your child or close contacts have cold and flu symptoms, a recent travel history or contact with COVID-19.

8. Where can I access reliable information during COVID-19?

Don't Forget The Bubbles - <https://dontforgetthebubbles.com/>

<https://www.health.gov.au/>

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>