A message to our expecting mothers and their families

Dear Patients and Visitors,

We know you may be concerned about the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it may impact your delivery at Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare (TMH). At the Tallahassee Memorial Alexander D. Brickler, MD Women’s Pavilion, ensuring mothers and their babies are cared for in a safe, healthy and caring environment is our greatest concern.

To support and protect our families, we have modified our visitor policy to allow only one healthy adult visitor at a time per mother in the Triage, Labor & Delivery, Family Care and Antenatal Care Units. In light of the unique nature of the Women’s Pavilion, we are requiring each mother’s one visitor to remain with her at all times, day or night. We encourage you to discuss this policy with your obstetricians and incorporate it into your birth plans.

Please see below for answers to some additional questions you may have. We appreciate your understanding as we all work together to continue navigating this evolving situation brought on by COVID-19, and are as excited as ever to help you welcome your little one into the world.

Thank you,

Tallahassee Memorial Alexander D. Brickler, MD Women’s Pavilion Team

Updated: April 7, 2020
1. Is the Women’s Pavilion visitor policy different from the visitor policy for the rest of the hospital?
   a. Yes. Mothers admitted to the Women’s Pavilion are allowed one visitor per patient. Visitors will be restricted to the Women’s Pavilion building only. Once with the patient, the visitor should plan on remaining with her throughout the hospital stay until discharge. (The visitor policy for the remainder of the hospital prohibits all visitors from entering the facility, except in a few special circumstances.) As the situation evolves, there may be additional changes to our Women’s Pavilion visitor policy. We appreciate your patience as we do everything possible to keep you and your little one safe.

2. Does my one visitor need to be the same person for my entire hospitalization?
   a. Yes. Your one visitor must be the same individual for the duration of your stay in the Women’s Pavilion. This policy is in place to minimize entries and exits into the facility and decrease the risk of contamination.

3. Does my doula count as my one visitor?
   a. Yes. If you choose to have a doula present for your delivery, your doula would be your one visitor. We understand that doulas can be a source of great support during this exciting and potentially stressful time. As a healthcare team, we support our patients’ right to choose non-pharmacologic means of pain control. Our nurses are well versed in providing options to our patients. We encourage patients to work with their doulas on how best to manage their symptoms during labor. Examples of non-pharmacologic methods to decrease pain include: walking, using a birthing ball, relaxing in the tub, music, meditative breathing, massage and warm packs, just to name a few.

4. Will COVID-19 impact my cesarean section?
   a. Cesarean sections will continue to be performed, where indicated, after a discussion between the patient and her provider. Additional precautions are in place to protect patients, their supports persons and the healthcare providers when COVID-19 is known or suspected. Appropriate steps are also in place to protect our healthy patients and their support persons.

5. Can my support person leave and get food?
   a. We ask that your support person refrains from entries and exits to and from the hospital to decrease risk of exposure to outside contaminants for our patients, their newborn infants and staff. We encourage patients and their support persons to plan and pack snacks and entertainment. Visitor food trays are also available during your stay.

6. Can I have food delivered?
   a. Your food will not be able to be delivered to the patient care floor or patient room. We also highly encourage your visitor to remain in your room with you at all times and will have visitor food trays available during your stay. If you need to have food delivered,
you will have to arrange for your food to be collected from outside the Women’s Pavilion.

7. Can flowers and other gifts be delivered to a patient?
   a. No outside deliveries of any kind are permitted to patient rooms at this time. However, flowers, balloons and gifts can be purchased via the Women’s Pavilion Gift Shop, which is currently open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. You can call them at 850-431-0294.

8. Can my children visit me in the hospital?
   a. The visitor policy allows for only one healthy adult visitor; therefore, children are not permitted access to the Women’s Pavilion at this time. This is for the safety of our patients, families and staff. We encourage you to call, FaceTime or use the platform of your choosing to make those connections with your children during your hospitalization.

9. Will I be able to FaceTime or use some other platform to livestream my delivery?
   a. We encourage patients to use virtual methods to connect with their loved ones during their delivery and stay. The hospital does have a recording/photograph policy prohibiting recording our providers and staff. This must be maintained and will be discussed during the admission process.

10. How do you determine if a patient or visitor is healthy?
    a. Every patient and visitor will be asked screening questions prior to entry into the Women’s Pavilion. If there is any concern for the health and safety of our patients, staff or other visitors, the individual will be directed to further evaluation and possible testing, to establish a plan of care. Visitors who do not pass their health screening may not be allowed to visit the Women’s Pavilion.

11. What do I do if I have respiratory symptoms and am currently pregnant?
    a. Please refer to Leon County Department of Health, the CDC and/or TMH.ORG/Coronavirus for the most up-to-date information regarding screening and evaluation of patients with respiratory symptoms.
    b. In general, if you have non-emergent respiratory symptoms (with no concerning signs or symptoms related to your pregnancy), please call your primary care provider to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19 or another respiratory illness.
    c. If you have respiratory symptoms and obstetrical concerns including, but not limited to, loss of fluid, vaginal bleeding, contractions or decreased fetal movement, please CALL TMH’s Labor & Delivery Triage Unit at 850-431-0150 to let us know that you are on your way, so we can have staff prepared to meet and escort you to a patient room for further assessment and evaluation.
    d. As always, if you have any obstetrical concerns and/or have been directed to the Labor & Delivery Unit by your provider, please proceed to the Women’s Pavilion. We are here and happy to help 24 hours a day.

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