



MIDWIVES
of
HEADWATER HILLS

16 Church St. Orangeville, ON L9W 1N2
(519) 941-BORN (2676) | Fax: (519) 941-2696
www.midwivesofheadwaterhills.ca
info@midwivesofheadwaterhills.ca

MIDWIVES OF HEADWATER HILLS UPDATE TO CLIENTS ON COVID-19 MARCH 17 2020

Dear clients of the Midwives of Headwater Hills,

We wanted to reach out to each of you to provide some guidance regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, and help you understand what to expect from your midwifery care in the coming weeks. In order to keep you (our clients), our staff, clinic, and hospital environment as safe and healthy as possible, the following changes will be instituted immediately:

PRENATAL CARE

Most health clinics are moving towards seeing patients in person only when absolutely essential, to avoid the risk of infection to both clients and staff. Your midwives will be doing the same. We will be moving towards a modified spacing of visits as recommended by the World Health Organization. This involves less prenatal visits than our clients are typically accustomed to. Due to additional precautionary measures that we may need to take, the chances of additional midwives on our team needing to care for you at various times are higher.

You can expect that a day or two before your next scheduled visit, one of your midwives will call you to discuss your visit, screen you for your risk of carrying COVID-19, discuss upcoming tests, answer your questions, and discuss various topics as we typically would during an in-person visit. Requisitions for ultrasounds and bloodwork will also be arranged over the phone and sent electronically. Your midwife will give you the option of coming into clinic later that week for a 5 minute clinical appointment that includes a check of your blood pressure and baby's heart rate. You will also have the option to delay or reschedule this to a later date, making a wider space between usual prenatal appointments.

When you attend your scheduled clinic visit, you will notice that extensive measures have been put in place to minimize contact with others and the risk of infection. This includes the locking of our clinic door to avoid multiple people being present in the waiting room or unscreened visitors entering our space. We will ask that you wait for your appointment outside in a vehicle and your midwife will call you when she is ready to see you and unlock the door. We are requiring that only clients and their newborns enter our clinic space at this time. This means that other children, partners and support people can not attend to keep the risk of transmission low. Our bathroom is currently off limits to the public and only available for staff use or required tests by clients.

POSTNATAL CARE

Home care is safer than any other option for mothers and babies and we will continue to provide postpartum home visits in the week after birth. Providing home care is, however, a higher risk for our midwives and for that reason we will be limiting the amount of time that we spend in your home to only what is clinically necessary. As with your prenatal visits, we will call you in advance of your visit to screen you and your family for symptoms of COVID-19, provide any advice and answers to questions as needed by phone in order to keep your clinical visit as brief as possible. We may also recommend less frequent visits if you and your baby are well. To further protect our midwives, we ask that no additional visitors be present in the room where we will conduct your home postpartum visit.

HOSPITAL BIRTH

Headwaters Hospital has not yet announced a restriction on visiting policies however we expect this in the coming days. During past pandemics this has been a restriction to only one support person. Your midwives support this view and ask that you respect vulnerable people and hospital staff by minimizing your support people. It is of the utmost importance that we pull together to protect our hospital resources and more vulnerable people at this time.

HOME BIRTH

We will continue to offer home birth to clients who choose this option, and we're happy to accommodate clients who are newly considering home birth in order to stay out of the hospital environment and avoid possible exposure to infection. Home birth in Ontario has excellent statistics of both safety and satisfaction. Your midwife can discuss your particular health situation with you and determine if you are a good candidate to consider this. If you or someone in your household are diagnosed with COVID-19 or awaiting swab results, we will strongly recommend hospital birth in order to follow the SOGC's recommendations for additional monitoring for women who are ill with COVID-19 in labor, as well as to be able to access additional supplies to protect our midwives from infection while caring for you.

EVENTS

All of our group events, including Group Postpartum Clinic, and Birth Options Night, have been cancelled indefinitely. We will be sure to email anyone eligible to attend these when they have resumed, and you are welcome to check in with us about these at any time. We understand that Birth Options is an important opportunity to learn about labor, birth, medical pain relief options, and home birth. Please do not hesitate to ask us to elaborate on these topics so that you feel your understanding is thorough.

We recognize that this is a stressful time for everyone, and feelings of stress, worry and anxiety may develop. We would like to encourage all of our clients to practice good self-care with rest, exercise, nutrition and seeking emotional support from those close to them. We want to reassure all of our clients that most healthy young people have a mild case of COVID-19 and will recover from this infection. However, we all have a duty and responsibility to protect our family, friends and neighbours and do our utmost to protect and preserve the hospital services that we crucially rely on.

Your midwife team is working hard to manage this situation. We are in constant contact with updates on the virus and are coordinating your care with new guidelines and research at all levels. Your health and well-being is of the utmost importance to us. If you have questions, concerns or need to discuss any of these recommendations further please call our office or use the pager as appropriate. If you or anyone in your household is experiencing symptoms, please do not attend our hospital or any other medical clinic. Please contact Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 or Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health Unit at 1-800-265-7293 X 7006 for further guidance.

Sincerely,

Your Midwife Team, Emilia, Hannah, Heather, Linda, Melissa and Stephanie

