

Pregnancy care in the era of COVID-19

Well congratulations on your pregnancy and welcome to the new way of providing care via telehealth!

Some of the way we deliver care is changing due to COVID-19, but what is not changing is our dedication to care for and monitor the health of you and your baby.

As we all work together to slow down the spread of COVID-19 (flattening the curve) we are working towards the creation of healthy spacing (physical distance). This means less face-to-face appointments and very targeted approaches to doing your physical examinations in order to reduce the risk to you and to your midwife, doctor or health care provider. This means that we will be asking you to help us, where possible, to monitor certain measurements such as BP and weight.

The list below includes measurements or strategies where you can partner with your midwife, doctor or health care provider to monitor the well-being of yourself and your baby. This needs to be flexible to account for differences between what you can do and what your health care provider will be doing.

Due to the low case numbers in Australia (and New Zealand) we are returning to face to face contact, at least for the second half of the pregnancy. It remains important that we work together to reduce the spread of Covid-19, so depending upon where you live and what the local protocols are, you may be having all your visits face to face or, most likely, having a mix of telehealth and face to face visits. Who knows what the future holds!

www.maternity-matters.com.au was built to link you to good sources of information as well as attempting to answer commonly asked questions. Please have a look through the resources, which include blogs, video clips and hyperlinks to other sites.

Type of measurement	How often should it be done?	The specifics
Blood pressure (BP) If you have an existing BP machine, terrific, if not, can you borrow or buy one? The following were the most cost effective ones recommended by Choice: AND MEDICAL UA-651SL; HEART SURE BP100; OMRON HEM-7130; SANITAS SBM 21	Before every visit with your midwife, doctor or health care provider	How do I do it? We recommend that you measure your blood pressure twice after sitting quietly for five minutes or so and following the instructions of the machine that you have. Write down the second reading (the first reading is often a little higher)

Type of measurement	How often should it be done?	The specifics
Weight Use your existing home scales or borrow or buy some	Before every visit with your midwife, doctor or health care provider, or more or less often as recommended	Weigh yourself at the same time of day, if practical, and write down the reading. You may (or may not) be asked to use an online tool such as a weight tracker (links to these are found on the “during” pages)
Baby’s movements	Please be aware of the way your baby moves (after 24 weeks or so) and let us know each visit	Also let us know if you have concerns about baby’s movements at any time. More information is in the “We need to talk about baby’s movements” article on the mid and late “during” pages
Swelling of your feet or hands	If you notice this, please let your midwife doctor or health care provider know each visit and sooner if the swelling is bad	Take a photograph and follow the instructions of your midwife doctor or health care provider as to how to get the photo to them
Growth of baby (aka Fundal Height)	Before every visit with your midwife, doctor or health care provider, or more or less often as recommended	Have a look on the specific COVID19 page for different ideas on how you can measure the growth of your baby

So, before each visit, have ready your BP, weight, movements, swelling and growth reports. You may be asked to email, SMS or read them out before or during your visit.

Further recommendations:
