



**DATE:** Updated September 22, 2021  
**TO:** Health Care Providers, Health Care Facilities, and Local Health Departments  
**FROM:** New York State Department of Health

**Guidance: Protocol for COVID-19 Testing Applicable for  
Pregnant People and Support Persons**

**Summary:**

- The purpose of this guidance is to update previous NYSDOH Guidance on “Protocol for COVID-19 Testing Applicable for Pregnant People and Support Persons” to reflect updated information on COVID-19 testing.
- Information on COVID-19 vaccination for people who are pregnant, lactating, or planning to become pregnant can be found at:  
[https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/08/covid\\_vaccine\\_guidance\\_for\\_pregnant\\_lactating\\_people\\_8.23.21.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/08/covid_vaccine_guidance_for_pregnant_lactating_people_8.23.21.pdf)

**Testing Recommendations for Pregnant People:**

- NYSDOH advises hospitals to review and revise their policies and procedures to ensure that COVID-19 is not introduced into the facility and that patients showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or who test positive for COVID-19, are appropriately identified and treated. As such, NYSDOH strongly encourages hospitals to establish protocols to check patients’ COVID-19 vaccination status, including pregnant persons planning to deliver at the birthing facility. Specifically, for pregnant persons who are not fully vaccinated or whose COVID-19 screening has identified potential risk/need for testing, NYSDOH recommends testing for COVID-19 in the week before their estimated due date (and/or scheduled delivery) or upon admission to a birthing facility.
- NYSDOH does not recommend testing of patients, including pregnant people, who are fully vaccinated or have recovered from laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 during the previous three months. Nor does NYSDOH recommend testing asymptomatic recently recovered patients, including pregnant people, to prove they are now negative. Nevertheless, each hospital, including birthing facilities, should make individualized testing determinations, as medically appropriate.
- Testing in the week before delivery or upon admission to a birthing facility for all asymptomatic pregnant people is also strongly encouraged irrespective of vaccination or recovery status in regions with a positivity rate of 2% or greater in the region according to the NY Forward seven-day average. “Region” refers to the location where the delivery will take place. For additional information please see NYSDOH guidance at: [elective surgery guidance update 051221.pdf \(ny.gov\)](#)
- For the purpose of this recommendation, a COVID-19 test is defined as a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or antigen test.

## **Guidance for Testing All Support Persons Accompanying Pregnant Individuals at Birthing Facilities:**

Hospitals and birth centers should also develop their own policies about support person testing, based on support persons' vaccination status and capacity of the facility and testing capabilities. Policies should include:

- Assessing support persons' vaccination status;
- Documentation of test results for support person(s) (includes doula and support person) if testing is performed; and
- If no documentation of test results is available and the support person is not fully vaccinated, but the support person is asymptomatic, allow support person to accompany pregnant individual with appropriate PPE.

Policies should also follow most recent NYSDOH guidance on [hospital visitation](#). Providers may contact the Department when there are questions about availability of testing kits and PPE at [covidproviderinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:covidproviderinfo@health.ny.gov)

### **Additional Resources:**

- [NYS DOH COVID-19 Website](#)
- [NYS Local Health Department Directory](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) COVID-19 Website](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) COVID-19 Pregnancy](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\) COVID-19 Website](#)