

# Information for radiologists on community-based maternity ultrasounds at Alert Level 2

16 September 2020

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19 in community settings and protecting both pregnant women and their community-based sonographers, radiologists and ancillary staff.

This information sheet should be read in conjunction with information available at [health.govt.nz/covid-19](https://health.govt.nz/covid-19)

## Symptoms and how COVID-19 is spread

COVID-19 presents with one or more of the following:

- a new or worsening cough
- fever (at least 38°C)
- shortness of breath
- a sore throat
- sneezing and runny nose
- temporary loss of smell.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have COVID-19. If you have these symptoms, please telephone Healthline (for free) on **0800 358 5453** or your doctor. More information can be found on the Ministry of Health website [health.govt.nz/covid-19](https://health.govt.nz/covid-19).

COVID-19, like the flu, can be spread from person to person. When a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks, they may spread droplets containing the virus a short distance, which quickly settle on surrounding surfaces.

Basic hygiene measures are the most important way to stop the spread of infections, including COVID-19.

- Avoid close contact with people suffering from any acute respiratory infection.
- Wash and dry hands (or use hand sanitiser) frequently, especially after direct contact with ill people or their environment (**hand hygiene**).
- Keep your hands away from your face (eyes, nose and mouth).
- Everyone should practice cough and sneeze etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with elbow, disposable tissues or clothing and wash and dry hands).

## Community-based maternity ultrasound during the period of COVID-19 pandemic

This advice aims to maintain maternity ultrasound services while minimising risk to community sonographers, other staff and the public.

Regarding individuals who have confirmed or probable COVID-19, or who are in self-isolation or quarantine because they are a close contact, or who have recently arrived from overseas: all non-urgent maternity imaging must be deferred until they have been cleared. Any urgent imaging required for these individuals must only be performed in centres with adequate PPE and training.

Staggered appointments can reduce exposure and the number of women in the waiting room. All women are able to bring one support person (no children please) with them to their ultrasound scan. Other family members or support persons should not enter the practice.

### Specific guidance

At Alert Level 2 ultrasound scanning will be performed as per routine prior to COVID-19, with the following exceptions:

- Any unwell women or those with a current respiratory tract illness, positive COVID-19 test, or recent contact with a known or suspected COVID-19 case will be asked to rebook non-urgent scans.
- Unwell women requiring an urgent scan may be scanned following a negative COVID-19 swab result, but please advise in advance.
- Please consider faxing or emailing referrals in order to reduce handling of paper.
- Sonography staff will continue wearing masks or face-shields and gloves during the scan due to the length of time performing obstetric scans and close proximity to clients.
- There may be short delays between scans to allow staff to clean surfaces and ultrasound equipment between scans.

The list of clinical indications for maternity ultrasound scans can be found here: **clinical indications**.

### Infection control procedures

Full infection control procedures are outside the scope of this document (**see information on the health professionals page for more detailed information**) however a sample protocol for ultrasound equipment cleaning is included below. This is a sample only and can be superseded as information evolves or replaced by local practice.

Sonographers, please note that we recommend use of gloves and that you change your scrubs or uniform daily. Use of PPE will depend on availability and local protocol. Please see the information on **the use of PPE** for those providing close contact essential services.

**Example of cleaning protocol** (from National Women's Ultrasound):

1. All non-essential transducers are to be removed from the machines and stored on a transducer rack and covered or stored in a transducer box.
2. Every machine, and transducer on the machine, is to be fully cleaned with the Sanicloth at the start of every day, at midday and again at the completion of the day.
3. Between patients, any transducer used during a scan is to be cleaned with a Sanicloth including cable and the keyboard and front of machine is to be wiped down with Sanicloth.

4. Preferentially place transducers necessary for an examination but not in use on the leftward side of the machine.
5. Liberal use of the Trophon for high level disinfection.
6. All keyboards and bench surfaces within the U/S offices are to be wiped down at the start of the day, midday and again at the end of the day at a minimum.
7. Clean door handle if door was closed for privacy.

## More information

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to [health.govt.nz/covid-19](https://health.govt.nz/covid-19).

Call Healthline on **0800 358 5453**. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you have concerns about your own health, speak to a doctor.