

Family and Visitor Guidelines

Visitors can be an important part of your stay in the hospital. We want you to have those close to you come to visit. You know who those people are and can help us by identifying them early during your hospitalization. They are the people we want to work with so they can support you. Often a hug, touch or a visit is just what is needed. We want to provide you and your family with quiet time together as much as possible.

There are no restrictions on visiting hours on the Cancer Care Unit. However, friends and family should be considerate of your need for rest. Visitors will be asked to leave the room for certain nursing and medical procedures.

Visitors should not visit if they are sick. To avoid possible infection of patients, sick visitors should not visit with family members on the Cancer Care Unit. Visitors should not come to the Cancer Care Unit if they have:

Fever	Cold
Herpes (cold sores)	Rash
Influenza	Shingles
Sore Throat	Diarrhea
Hepatitis A	Skin Infection
Measles	Chicken Pox
Recent live viral vaccinations	

Young children should not come to the hospital if they have fever, runny nose, cough, vomiting, or diarrhea.

If visitors are unsure, **CHECK WITH THE NURSE OR DOCTOR BEFORE VISITING.**

If visitors or visiting children are exposed to a contagious disease, or have been recently immunized, please **CHECK WITH THE NURSE BEFORE COMING TO THE HOSPITAL.** Visitors should **NOT** have any of the following:

Herpes Simplex (Cold Sores)

Incubation period: Up to 2 weeks
Mode of Transmission: Direct contact with lesions
Period of Communicability: Until lesions are dry/crusted

Herpes Zoster (Shingles)

Incubation period: From 2-3 weeks
Commonly 13-17 days
Mode of Transmission: Direct contact with lesions
Period of Communicability: Until lesions are dry/crusted

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Chicken Pox

Incubation period: From 2–3 weeks

Commonly 13–17 days

Mode of Transmission: Airborne & direct contact with lesions

Period of Communicability: From 3 days before first lesion to 6 days after last new vesicles

Measles

Incubation period: From 8–13 days

Mode of Transmission: Airborne

Period of Communicability: From beginning of constitutional symptoms (runny nose, fever, etc.) to 5 days after onset of rash

Hepatitis A

Incubation period: from 15–50 days

Mode of Transmission: Mostly from eating food that has been contaminated by an infected food handler. Also from contaminated water.

Period of Communicability: During last half of incubation period until after the first week of jaundice.

Influenza

Incubation period: 1–4 days

Mode of Transmission: Droplet (from infected droplets from coughs or sneezes). Also from touching objects that are contaminated then touching one's mouth or nose.

Period of Communicability: The day before symptoms develop to up to seven days after becoming ill.

Live Vaccines

Notes:

Occasionally, recipients of live vaccines can expose and transmit infections to individuals with suppressed immune systems. It is therefore very important for you to avoid individuals who have received live vaccines when your immune system is depressed. These vaccines include, oral polio (TOPV) vaccine, yellow fever, BCG, and the chicken pox (varicella) vaccine. Live vaccines can be transmitted through contact with stool or urine and are communicable up to 8 weeks after the vaccine has been given. Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) is a live attenuated vaccine. Although disease transmission is highly unlikely. You should not change the diaper of an infant who has received the MMR vaccine within 8 weeks.

In addition, it is very important that family members avoid live vaccines for as long as your immune system is suppressed. If a family member does receive a live immunization after your transplant, you still need to avoid direct contact with them for 8 weeks because of possible virus exposure. If you have questions, please contact your transplant physician or ASCT coordinator.

Before your transplant, we will be testing your immunity to the chicken pox virus. If the test shows that you are not immune, we will need to also test those family and household members in close contact with you who have not had chicken pox, or the vaccine. If any of them prove not to be immune to the chicken pox virus, we will vaccinate them a minimum of 6 weeks before your transplant. This will prevent you from being harmfully exposed to the virus.

Visitors who have recently received killed vaccines will be allowed. They include:

- Influenza
- Hepatitis A and/or B
- Rabies
- Pertussis
- Typhoid
- Cholera
- Plague
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pneumococcal
- Meningococcal
- Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV)

Notes:

Items of Importance for Visitors

1. In case of a large family or group of friends, one or two contact people should be designated to be calling the hospital for information. Family or friends can then set up a telephone tree to obtain information from these contact people throughout the hospitalization.
2. Please do not leave valuables in the hallway. We cannot be responsible for lost valuables.
3. Please check with the nursing staff before bringing any food from home or other outside areas, as the patient will be on a special diet. The staff can heat up food brought in for the patient.
4. Although we cannot provide meals, beverages in the form of coffee or tea are available for immediate family members on the Cancer Care Unit.
5. The Rehabilitation Team is available to assist you if there are any housing or financial concerns.
6. Lodging arrangements must be made outside of the hospital for other family members. Please refer to the listing in the back of the booklet for suggestions.
7. A Family Room is located on the Cancer Care Unit. This room is designated for the family and friends of the Oncology patients to provide a restful, quiet space.
8. Smoking is *NOT PERMITTED* anywhere inside the hospital. Please check with the nurses' station for designated outdoor smoking areas.
9. An escort service is available through the Security Department for visitors leaving the hospital after dark. Please use this free service whenever you wish. Remember we care about the well-being of family and visitors, too.

Things to Remember within the Patient's Room

Notes:

1. Visitors should put on a new mask and wash their hands for 15-20 seconds using antiseptic lotion soap each time you enter the room. Masks need to be changed every 60 minutes. They can be found outside the room.
2. The door to the patient's room must be kept closed at all times.
3. We encourage family participation in patient care. Please check with the staff before doing anything in case there are any restrictions.
4. If the intravenous pump alarm goes off, please call the nurse. **DO NOT** turn the alarm off.
5. Please do not empty the patient's urinals or emesis basins. The staff needs to measure and observe all output.
6. If the patient's condition necessitates it, **one** family member will be allowed to sleep in the patient's room.
7. Visitors are not allowed to eat or drink in the isolation rooms.
8. Do not use the patient's bathroom or shower at any time. There are **no** exceptions. For location of visitor bathrooms, please check with the nurse.
9. Fresh flowers, live plants, and dried flowers are not allowed in the patient rooms as they tend to harbor fungus. Calendars, balloons, silk flowers, artificial plants, photographs, and posters are permissible. However, since some articles are more likely to contain germs than others, it is best to check with the nurse before any item is taken into the isolation room.