

# What Essential Care Partners Need to Know Before Coming to UHN

## What is an Essential Care Partner?

An Essential Care Partner is a support person whose presence is considered essential to the safety and well-being of a patient while they are in the hospital. Only patients with appointments and their Essential Care Partners can enter the hospital at this time. There is no access for members of the public.

- Patients who are eligible for an Essential Care Partner support can choose 1 Essential Care Partner who may visit during their hospital stay. You can choose a second Essential Care Partner in case your main support person is not available.
- We ask that Essential Care Partners limit close contact with other people as much as possible to reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. It is also important to let us know if your Essential Care Partner tests positive for COVID-19 within 2 weeks of being in the hospital with you. Contact your clinic or unit to let them know.
- All Essential Care Partners must have approval before coming to the hospital. Please speak with the clinic or unit before coming to the hospital, as far in advance of the visit as possible.
- If you are having surgery: Your clinic will call you 1 business day before your surgery to talk about arrangements for your Essential Care Partner. If you are having your surgery on a Monday, the clinic will call you the Friday before.

## How can I find contact information for the clinic or unit?

You can find contact information for the clinic or unit on the [UHN website](https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies) (https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies). You can search by clinic, unit or hospital site.

Visit [UHN's COVID-19 page](https://www.uhn.ca/COVID19) (https://www.uhn.ca/COVID19) for more information on preparing for your visit.

## I have been outside of Canada in the last 14 days. Can I enter the hospital as an Essential Care Partner?

Every person entering Canada from another country must quarantine for 14 days.

For more information on mandatory quarantine and exemptions to the policy, please read the [Information for International Travellers Coming to UHN as Essential Care Partners](https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Health_Information/Health_Topics/Documents/ECP_Quick_Guide_INT_Travelers.pdf) (https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Health\_Information/Health\_Topics/Documents/ECP\_Quick\_Guide\_INT\_Travelers.pdf).

### On the **day before** and **morning of** your visit:

- ✓ **Self-screen for symptoms of COVID-19.** Please **do not** come to the hospital if:
  - you have any symptoms of COVID-19
  - you have been outside of Canada in the past 14 days
  - you had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days
  - you had contact with someone who suspects they have COVID-19 in the past 14 days

- ✓ **Check your arrival or visit time (if applicable).** The manager may have given you a specific [entrance to use](https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#enter) (https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#enter) or an arrival or visit time. Please arrive at the entrance you were given at the right time. Help us make sure there aren't too many people in the hospital at the same time so we can have safe physical distancing.

Visiting hours at UHN are from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm. You may visit for up to 4 hours in most inpatient units. You may visit for up to 2 hours if the patient is in an intensive care unit.

- ✓ **Prepare what you will need while at the hospital.** We expect you to stay with the patient while you are inside UHN. You will not be able to walk around or go in or out of the hospital to purchase or retrieve items from your vehicle.

## When you arrive at the hospital:

- ✓ **Wash your hands.** Wash your hands using the hand sanitizer provided. If you are wearing gloves, please remove and discard them or put them away to wash your hands properly.
- ✓ **Go through entrance screening.** We ask you:
  - questions about your health and symptoms of COVID-19
  - if you have travelled outside of Canada recently
  - if you had close contact with people who have COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19

You must pass [entrance screening](https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#arriving) (https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#arriving) to be allowed in the hospital.

As an Essential Care Partner, you play an important role in helping to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the hospital. Please answer entrance screening questions honestly for the safety of yourself and others.

Patients can use the [UHN Screening tool](https://uhnpatientscreen.ca) (https://uhnpatientscreen.ca) on their mobile device. Essential Care Partners must still speak with an entrance screener when they arrive.

- ✓ **Put on a mask.** Everyone entering UHN [must wear a mask](https://www.uhn.ca/Covid19/Pages/masking_policy.aspx) (https://www.uhn.ca/Covid19/Pages/masking\_policy.aspx).
  - Screening staff will give you a mask, even if you are wearing a mask from home. You must wear the medical mask at all times while inside UHN. For more information, read the [Universal Masking Policy at UHN](https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Health_Information/Health_Topics/Documents/Universal_Masking_FAQ.pdf) (https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Health\_Information/Health\_Topics/Documents/Universal\_Masking\_FAQ.pdf).
  - Always put your reusable mask in a bag after removing it.
  - Try not to touch your face or adjust your mask while you are wearing it.
  - Always wash your hands before and after putting on or taking off your mask.
- ✓ **Wash your hands.** Please wash your hands again after putting on your mask.

## While you are **inside** the hospital:

- ✓ **Go directly to the care area you are visiting** (unit, clinic, treatment area or designated meeting area). Sign in to the inpatient unit when you arrive and provide your contact information.
- ✓ **Stay with the patient you are supporting.** Do not walk around the hospital or spend time in public spaces. Stay with the patient that you are there to support or in designated waiting areas if you need to be separated during tests or treatments.

- **If you are visiting an inpatient unit or other long-stay area (rehab or long term care):** If you were given a designated meeting area to go to by the manager, please go there. If not, please go directly to the unit and check in with the ward clerk. You will be asked to stay at the patient's bedside and to not visit other areas of the hospital.
  - **If you are going to an outpatient clinic, test or treatment area:** Go directly to the clinic or treatment area with the patient you are escorting. You may be asked to wait in another area or outside the hospital if the waiting room is too full or if the patient will be in a test or treatment on their own for a long time.
  - **For Day Surgery:** Essential Care Partners are not able to stay with the patient in the Pre-Operative Care Unit (POCU) before surgery or the Post-Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU). The health care team will contact you when the patient is ready to be picked up.
- ✓ **Wear your mask.** Wear your mask the entire time you are inside UHN. Your mask should be **fully covering your nose, mouth and chin at all times.**
- Leave your mask on until you are outside of the hospital or back home.
  - Please wait until you can leave the hospital to eat. If you are not able to wait, please **do not** remove your mask to eat or drink in a clinic waiting room, while visiting an inpatient room or if you are in an area where you cannot stay at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people.
  - You must wear a mask at all times if you are visiting someone staying overnight at the hospital. This includes when you are in the patient's room.

- ✓ **Practice physical distancing.** Follow directions from staff, wall signage and floor markers throughout the hospital. Visit the UHN website to learn more about what [physical distancing measures](https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#inside) (https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#inside) are in place.
- ✓ **Wash your hands often.** [Wash your hands](https://www.uhn.ca/Patients/Families/Health_Information/Health_Topics/Documents/Hand_Hygiene_at_UHN.pdf) (https://www.uhn.ca/Patients/Families/Health\_Information/Health\_Topics/Documents/Hand\_Hygiene\_at\_UHN.pdf) often while inside the hospital, including:
  - before and after touching your mask
  - before and after eating
  - after using the washroom
  - after touching surfaces such as railings, buttons, handles or doors

## After your visit:

- ✓ **If you test positive for COVID-19** within 14 days before or after visiting the hospital, let us know. This information is important for contact tracing and will help stop the spread of COVID-19 in the hospital.
  - **If you visited a patient staying in the hospital:** call the unit you visited.
  - **If you came to an appointment with a patient:** call Infection Prevention and Control at 416 340 4800 extension 6063 and call the clinic or unit you visited.