Limits On Who Can Enter UHN During The COVID-19 Pandemic

For patients, caregivers and visitors

Read this brochure to learn:

- why University Health Network (UHN) is limiting who can enter the hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic
- what limits are in place
- what to expect when you arrive for an appointment

Important: Only patients needing urgent follow up appointments or care are allowed into the hospital.
Who can enter UHN hospitals?

Only patients with appointments can enter the hospital at the patient entrance. Do **not** come to UHN unless your health care provider has told you to.

- Patients **must** have an appointment to enter specific areas in the hospital. Confirm your appointment with your health care team before coming to the hospital.
- Patients with emergencies can enter the Emergency Departments at Toronto Western or Toronto General without an appointment through the Emergency Department entrance.
- Caregivers, visitors and drivers are **not allowed** in the hospital. Caregivers and visitors can include family, partners, friends or anyone who is part of a patient’s support network.
- This includes the Emergency Departments. There is a **strict** no visitor policy in the Emergency Departments at UHN.

Why is UHN limiting who can enter the building?

UHN is limiting who can enter the hospital to lower the risk of spreading COVID-19 to patients and the staff who care for them.

People who come to the hospital to support patients may bring in COVID-19 without knowing it. The risk of spreading COVID-19 in the hospital gets higher with each person who enters.

Patient and staff safety:

The chances of COVID-19 entering and spreading within the hospital are much lower when fewer people are in the building. Fewer people in the hospital means:

- there is more space in the hospital to allow for physical distance between people. All Canadians are asked to practice physical distancing (keeping at least 2 metres or 6 feet from other people) to prevent COVID-19 from spreading.
• fewer people using common areas and touching surfaces such as door handles and elevator buttons.

• lower chance that someone in the building has the virus and can spread it to others.

• patients are better protected. People with health problems have a high risk of getting seriously sick if they get COVID-19.

• less use of personal protective equipment (PPE). The hospital needs to make sure there is enough personal protective equipment for patients and for the staff providing their care.

Your Safety:

UHN is currently treating patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 symptoms. Each visit into the hospital may increase your risk of being exposed to COVID-19.

These limits apply to all hospital visits including:

• appointments

• tests and treatments

• ambulatory care

• stays at the hospital (inpatient units)

This change will last until the Government of Ontario tells us it is safe to remove these limits. As difficult as it is, the limits keep everyone as safe as possible.

Exceptions:

The unit manager may approve caregivers or visitors to enter the hospital in special situations. They must approve the visit before your caregiver or visitor comes to the hospital.

These special situations are for:

• patients who are receiving end-of-life care or are critically ill. We may ask visitors to visit only 1 time each day.
• patients who have just had critical (life-saving) surgery.
• patients who are frail and need a caregiver for their safety.

We do not make exceptions for visits to the Emergency Department.

**Important:** Please **do not** bring caregivers or visitors to the hospital if they have not been approved by the unit manager.

**How to ask for visitor approval:**

Call the clinic or inpatient unit as early as possible before your visit or appointment. Speak with the unit manager or another member of your health care team about your options.

• Caregiver or visitor approval is for a specific person, day, clinic and hospital. It cannot be used for a different person, day, clinic or hospital.

• You will need to ask for approval for each appointment, such as:
  ▪ appointments in different clinics on the same day.
  ▪ appointments in the same clinic on different days.

• Ask the unit manager about your situation. If the unit manager is not available, the administrator-in-charge can also approve a visit.

**What to do if you have caregiver or visitor approval**

When you get caregiver or visitor approval:

• You get a letter from the manager or administrator-in-charge approving your caregiver or visitor. Show it to the staff at the hospital entrance when you arrive for your visit.

  **OR**

• Your visitor’s name is added to a list given to staff at the hospital entrance. Your visitor tells staff at the hospital entrance their name and who they are visiting when they arrive.
All approved caregivers or visitors must pass the screening criteria before entering the hospital. This means they cannot have any symptoms: fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat or shortness of breath, and they cannot have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

Any visitor or caregiver that fails the screening criteria will not be allowed to enter.

Who can I contact if I disagree with a decision for my situation?

Speak with the unit manager first. You may contact Patient Relations at 416 340 4907 or patientrelations@uhn.ca if you need more help after speaking with the unit manager.

What to expect when you come for an appointment

UHN staff meet you at the door and ask you why you are at the hospital. We ask if you have any of the following symptoms:

- fever over 38°C (100.4°F)
- cough
- shortness of breath
- sore throat
- runny nose

If you have any of these symptoms:

- We ask you to wear a mask and use hand sanitizer.
- **At Princess Margaret only:** We take you to a COVID-19 assessment clinic in the hospital. This is a required part of your care.
- We take you to your appointment.

There may be line-ups. Please come to the hospital early to give enough time for screening questions before your appointment.
Note: Expect the screening processes to change as we learn more about the virus. Find up-to-date information on our screening process at www.uhn.ca/covid19 or call your health care team.

My caregiver usually helps me during my appointments. How can they join me?

You can have your caregiver join your appointment over the phone. Call them on your cellphone and use the speakerphone function so everyone can hear each other.

You can also ask your health care team if you can record your appointment to share with your caregiver later.

- You can only record in a private setting such as a clinic room.
- Everyone in the room must agree to be recorded.

Important: To protect everyone’s privacy, audio and video recording is not allowed in public and common areas of the hospital.

What services are available to patients when at UHN?

- **Telephone interpretation:** We provide a telephone interpretation service for patients who prefer to speak in a language other than English during appointments.

- **Porters and Escorts:** Support staff helps you get around the hospital safely. We arrange a porter or escort for you at the hospital entrance as needed.

- **Free Wi-Fi:** Bring your own cellphone, tablet or laptop and use our free guest Wi-Fi.

- **Centres for Spiritual Reflection:** UHN’s Centres for Spiritual Reflection and Musallah rooms are open for private prayer and meditation.

- **Food courts:** Food courts remain open. Please pick up your food and do not sit in the food court.
• **Outpatient pharmacies**: Outpatient pharmacies are open to pick up prescriptions.

**I am picking someone up. Where will I meet them?**

Ask the patient to call you when they are ready to be picked up. You must wait outside the hospital.

**Where can I learn more about changes at UHN due to COVID-19?**

Our hospital processes change quickly as we learn more about the COVID-19 virus. Find up-to-date information at [www.uhn.ca/covid19](http://www.uhn.ca/covid19), such as:

• our visitors policy
• what hospital entrances patients can use
• links to credible information on COVID-19
• up-to-date information on UHN clinics and services