

Preventing the Spread of Infections

**For anyone who has an appointment or is visiting
University Health Network (UHN)**

Read this brochure to learn more about what steps you can take to keep yourself and other patients or staff safe when you visit the hospital.



How can visiting when I'm sick harm patients at UHN?

Patients in the hospital are usually already very sick or can be having treatments that weaken the body's immune system like chemotherapy. This means they have trouble fighting infections.

If you visit the hospital when you are sick you can make patients sick or cause new health problems.

If you feel sick, do not visit friends or family members staying at the hospital.

If you have an appointment at the hospital and have any of these signs of infection, please call the clinic and ask if it is safe for you to visit:

- a new cough
- a fever (temperature over 38 °C or 101 °F)
- shortness of breath (worse than usual)
- severe headache (worse than usual)
- muscle aches
- extreme fatigue (or feeling very tired)
- vomiting (throwing up)
- diarrhea
- new or worsening rash
- runny nose
- sore throat

If you have any of the symptoms listed above, please let someone from the unit or clinic know. You may need to wear a mask or wait in a separate room.

Visitors may need to wear a mask during the visit or they may be asked to leave.

How can I help to prevent the spread of infections in the hospital?

Help keep everyone safe. Follow the advice below before coming to any appointment or visiting a patient at UHN.

✓ **Do not visit the hospital if you are sick.**

- It's best to stay home if you are not sure that you are well enough to visit. Or, call your loved one's nurse or doctor and tell them how you are feeling. Ask if it is safe for you to visit.
- If you are sick you may be asked to leave the hospital or wear a mask during your visit to prevent spreading germs to others.

✓ **If you have an appointment, call the clinic and ask if it is safe for you to visit.**

- The clinic may have special steps for you to follow.
- If you are sick you may be asked to reschedule your visit or wear a mask during your visit to prevent spreading germs to others.

✓ **Wash your hands before entering and when leaving the hospital.**

- Washing your hands is one of the easiest ways to stop the spread of germs while you are at the hospital. Wash your hands or use hand gel (sanitizer) often.
- Anyone can use the alcohol-based hand gel found throughout the hospital. You can also wash your hands with soap and water.
- When visiting a patient, be sure to wash your hands before and after leaving their room.

- ✓ **If you are visiting someone at UHN, do not use the patient's washroom.**

- ✓ **Do not share food you bring to the hospital with other patients.**

- ✓ **If you bring a child with you (anyone 12 years of age or younger), make sure an adult is with them at all times.**
 - Children are welcome to visit the hospital, but can only enter an area or patient room with an adult. It is the adult's responsibility to watch a child and make sure they are safe.
 - Do not come to the hospital if you or your child is sick.

- ✓ **Follow any infection control instructions or signs.**
 - Sometimes patients need to be isolated with "Additional Precautions" to prevent spreading infections to other patients and staff while they are at the hospital.
 - If the person you are visiting is isolated, there will be a sign posted on the door to their room and you might have to wear a gown, eye protection, gloves or mask before going into their room.

- If you see one of these signs when visiting, please follow the instructions on the signs. If you are not sure what to do, please ask a nurse for help.



Who can I talk to if I have questions?

If you have questions or concerns:

- Ask your nurse to call Infection Prevention and Control
- Email us at InfectionControlUHN@uhn.ca

Visit www.uhnpatienteducation.ca for more health information.

Contact us to provide feedback or request this brochure in a different format, such as large print or electronic formats: pfep@uhn.ca

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