

# Visiting the Coronary Intensive Care Unit (CICU)

## Welcome to our unit

We know that this is a difficult time for you and your family. The staff in the Coronary Intensive Care Unit (CICU) at Toronto General Hospital are here to help and support you.

This brochure has information about the CICU and what you can expect while on our unit.

We hope you find this information useful.

Lindsay Love  
Nurse Manager



## **What is the goal of the CICU?**

By working together with you, our goal is to provide the best possible care for you and your loved one. You are an important member of our team. You know your relative or friend best and your feedback is important to us.

## **Coping with a serious illness**

Your loved one is with us because they need highly skilled health care professionals and special modern technology and medicine.

Even though your loved one is seriously ill, we know this experience is also stressful for you and your entire family.

You can help us by telling us what you need. Remember to also take care of yourself by eating properly and getting enough sleep. Take time away from the hospital when you need to. While you are away, your loved one will never be alone in the CICU.

## **Choosing a spokesperson**

Please choose one family member or friend to be the spokesperson for the patient when the patient is unable to speak for themselves. This person relays information from the healthcare team to other family and friends. We will also call the spokesperson if there is an emergency.

Having a spokesperson reduces confusion, helps protect patient privacy, and lets the healthcare team focus on what's most important — caring for your loved one.

## **What are family meetings?**

Family meetings are a chance for the healthcare team and the family to meet and talk about the patient's progress, values and plan of care.

The spokesperson can speak to the medical staff at any time, but we can also arrange family meetings if your family or the CICU staff think it is necessary. These meetings will be held in the unit at a time when everyone can join.

## **Being family partners in care**

We believe that family members are an important part in the care of our patients.

Here are some ways you can take part in your loved one's care:

- Talk to them
- Hold their hand
- Talk about family events
- Read out loud
- Brush their hair
- Brush their teeth
- Give special skin care like putting lotion on dry skin

Talk to the nurse for more ways to take part.

## **What you can expect in the CICU**

The unit may seem busy with alarms sounding and machines at each bedside. Here is what you can expect:

- All of our patients are attached to heart monitors so our nurses and doctors can closely watch their status.
- Your loved one may have different tests such as blood tests, x-rays, CT Scans, Echocardiograms, and ultrasounds.
- Sometimes patients need more than one intravenous (IV) line. IVs can be used to give medicine, measure pressures and collect blood.
- Often patients need oxygen. Oxygen can be given through a mask, with small tubes in the nostrils or from a breathing machine.

## **Who is part of the CICU team?**

Many people will take part in the care of your family member.

Here are the people you will meet most often:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>ICU Registered Nurse (RN)</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has specialized Critical Care training</li><li>• Will be with your relative 24 hours a day.</li></ul> |
| <b>Senior Cardiology Residents and Medical Residents</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Between 2 to 6 medical doctors in the CICU who provide medical care 24 hours a day.</li></ul>         |

**Staff Cardiologist**

- Doctor in charge of the medical doctors and leads patient rounds every morning.
- A new Staff Cardiologist starts every Monday and gets a report on all the patients from the doctor who was there the week before.

**Consultants**

- In charge of the unit.
- Can be contacted with any concerns not addressed by the bedside nurse or medical team.

**Patient Care Coordinator (PCC)**

- Helps the manager with patient care.
- Can also be contacted with any concerns not addressed by the bedside nurse or medical team.

**Charge Nurse**

- Helps with the flow of patients entering and leaving the unit.
- Helps care for patients and works with the medical team.

**Patient Care Assistant (PCA)**

- Helps the nurses with the personal care and mobility of patients.

**Physiotherapist**

- Creates exercise programs to help keep the body strong and the lungs clear.

**Respiratory Therapist**

- Takes care of the 'breathing machine' (ventilator) and helps patients to breathe more comfortably.

### **Registered Dietitian**

- Recommends special diets and healthy foods that are right for the patient.

### **Social Worker**

- Provides practical and emotional support throughout your loved ones hospital stay as needed.

### **Spiritual Care Providers**

- Provides emotional support to patients and families, they do not represent any specific religion.
- They can help you explore your beliefs, values, concerns and emotions in a way that honours your feelings.
- Can help coordinate religious support and ceremonies with community partners.

### **Volunteers**

- Takes care of the waiting area and helps to organize your visits into the CICU.
- Can direct you to other areas and services within the hospital.

## **Keeping your hands clean**

Infections and illness can spread in the hospital by germs we carry on our hands.

Hand sanitizer gel is available on the unit.

- Please use it each time you enter the unit and before you leave.
- Please use it before each time you touch your loved one. For example, use it before holding hands, helping with meals or helping to brush teeth.

**Please do not visit the CICU if you are feeling sick or have a cough, fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, unexplained rash or anything you think is a cold or flu.**

## **Do you need help communicating in English with the health care team?**

If you or your loved one need interpretation, please ask the nurse or ward clerk for more information. The CICU can help you by using our interpretation phones and services.

## **Our visiting policy in the CICU**



We know that being with your loved one is very important. Our CICU staff will do their very best to accommodate your visits into the unit.



When you arrive at the hospital, please make your way to the 2nd floor waiting room and call into the unit, extension 4066. We will check with the nurse to be sure that it is a good time to visit.



We have no restrictions on visiting hours. However, every patient's situation is different. Please speak with your nurse.

The unit and patient rooms have limited space. To allow us to care for our patients safely, we ask that only **2 people visit at a time** and that you do not sleep at the patient's bedside. If you would like to stay overnight in hospital to be with your loved one, please stay in the visitor's lounge outside the CICU. (The housekeeping may need to ask you to move so they can clean the area.)

Although young children can visit, **an adult must be with them at all times.**

You can bring cards or small gifts for your loved one. We encourage you to bring toiletries for your loved one, such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, razor and shaving cream. To prevent the spread of germs, flowers are not allowed.

**Important:** We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please take valuables home with you.

### **Using the phone**

Cellphones are allowed. For visitors using cellphones, please use the phone in the hallway of the unit or outside the unit. This helps to keep the noise down so patients get the rest they need.

Payphones are in the hallway next to the waiting room. If the patient needs a phone in their room, please ask the nurse for help. To make a call into a patient room, please call the main desk first and ask for your family member by name.

### **Where to stay while your relative is at UHN**

The CICU has a list of hotels, bed and breakfasts and short-term rentals in the area. Some places have discounts or hospital rates if you ask. Please let us know if you need a copy of this list.

### **Where to eat**

There is a Tim Hortons and Starbucks near the University Avenue entrance and a full Food Court on the ground floor of the Eaton Building, near the Elizabeth Street entrance.

Food Court hours: Hours vary.

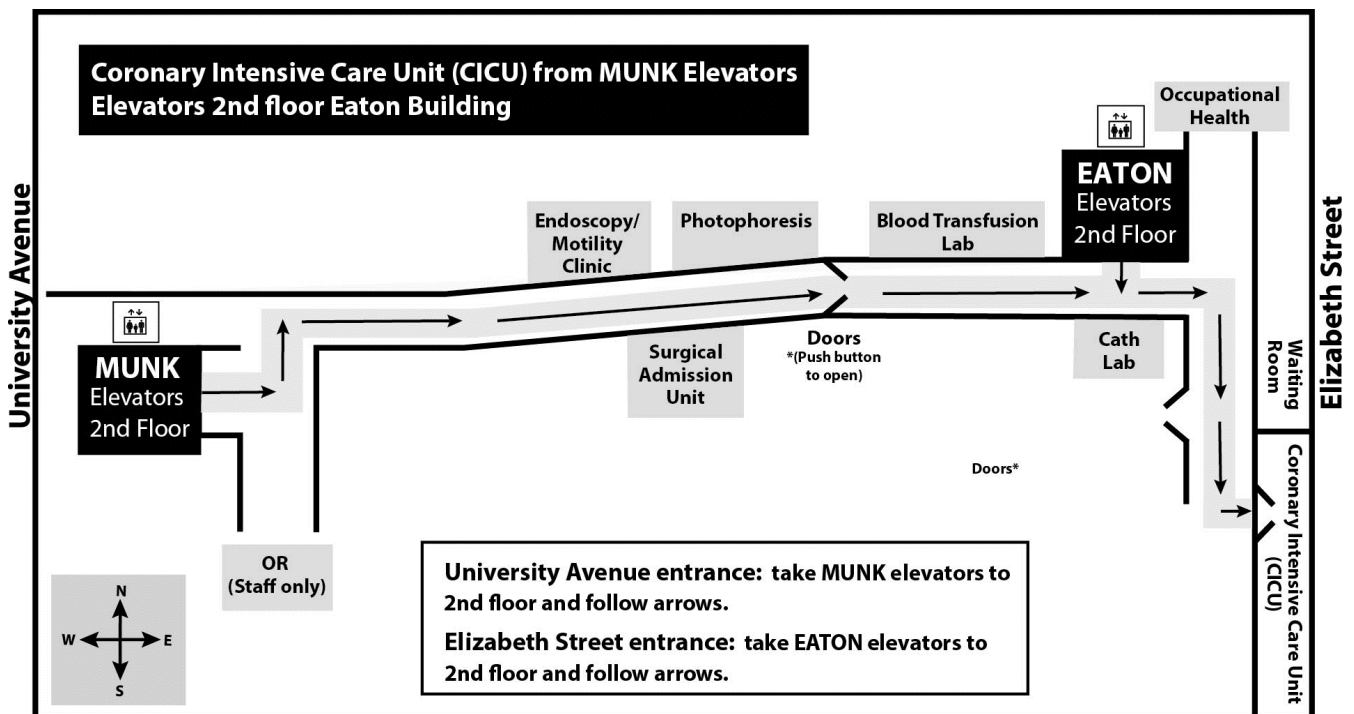


## Using the washrooms

The visitor washrooms are on the 2nd floor next to the waiting room, beside the payphones. We ask that visitors do not use the patient bathrooms. Other washrooms can be found on the ground floor of the Eaton building on your way to the food court.

## Is there free Internet access?

Yes. UHN offers free WiFi access for all visitors and patients in the hospital. To connect, log onto the 'Wireless Guest' network. You don't need a security password.



## Where to find us

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