

UW Medicine

## For Visitors at UW Medicine Hospitals

*Safety is our top priority*

We know that having loved ones visit can help a patient heal. But, during the COVID-19 outbreak, we need to take extra steps to protect our patients, visitors, and staff. This is why we now have a special Visitors Policy at all UW Medicine medical centers: Harborview, UWMC - Montlake, UWMC - Northwest, and Valley.



*Visitors to the hospital must wear a mask at all times.*

### Visitors Policy

This is our UW Medicine Visitors Policy as of May 19, 2020:

- Most patients in the hospital may have **only 1 visitor per day**. That visitor must stay in the patient's room until they are ready to leave the hospital, unless a unit nurse tells them otherwise. If a visitor leaves the patient's room, they may not visit again on the same day. This includes leaving to run errands or to smoke.
- We screen all visitors for signs of illness when they come to the hospital. These signs include runny nose, headache, fever, sore throat, cough, being short of breath, having problems breathing, muscle pain, new loss of smell or taste, chills, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. We ask anyone with symptoms to leave and return on another day.
- Each visitor must wear a cloth or paper surgical mask **at all times** while they are in the hospital building. The hospital will provide a mask if a visitor does not have one.
- Visitors should wash their hands or use hand gel before they enter the patient's room and as they are leaving.
- In our childbirth units, patients may have 2 healthy support persons with them during labor. Starting 2 hours after delivery, only 1 support person may stay at the bedside. The 2nd support person must leave the hospital.

- One member of the patient’s spiritual community may visit, in addition to that patient’s 1 visitor.
- We cannot allow any visitors under the age of 16 at this time, unless it is an end-of-life visit. (See next item.)
- Patients who are at the end of life may have 2 visitors. A patient is considered to be at the end of life if their medical team believes they are very likely to die in the coming days. Minors may visit these patients if they are with a parent or guardian and the care team approves.
- These patients may have 1 visitor in addition to their caregiver:
  - Patients who need a caregiver for safety because of their mental or developmental status
  - Patients who need a caregiver for safety because of their disability, such as hearing loss or vision impairment
  - Patients who have a home caregiver who is being trained
- Patients under the age of 18 may have 1 visitor, or 2 parents or guardians.
- No visitors may enter rooms of patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who are being tested for COVID-19, except for end-of-life patients (see above).
- Visitors must follow each hospital’s visiting hours and policies.
- UW Medicine employees who have loved ones in the hospital must follow this Visitors Policy.

## **To Our Visitors**

- Please take care of all errands before you come to the hospital. You may not leave the hospital and return on the same day. We encourage you to go home at night to rest.
- If you are wearing a valved mask, we will ask you to wear one of our non-valved masks while you are in the hospital.
- Please do not take any supplies or equipment from the hospital.
- The nurse manager of each unit may limit visit length as needed.

## **If you are waiting for a surgery or procedure to finish:**

- You must stay in or near the waiting room where we asked you to wait.

### **If your loved one is an inpatient and is having a procedure or surgery:**

- We will update you by phone as their recovery progresses.
- You will be able to see the patient in their hospital room after their recovery period.
- If your loved one goes from the operating room or procedural area to an intensive care unit (ICU), they may have 1 visitor after they are settled in. This may take up to an hour. The ICU will call you when they are ready for you to visit.
- If your loved one is a minor, only their parents or guardians may be in the pre-op and recovery areas.

### **If your loved one is an outpatient and is having a procedure or surgery:**

- We will update you by phone as their recovery progresses.
- If your loved one is a minor, only their parents or guardians may be in the pre-op and recovery areas.
- We will go over your loved one's post-op instructions with you by phone at the same time we are teaching the patient.

### **If you plan to spend the night in the hospital:**

- Please know that you cannot leave the patient's room to go to the cafeteria or espresso stand.
- Most times, we will ask you to use the patient's bathroom. We will tell you if you should use a public restroom instead.

### **Thank You**

This Visitors Policy will help us keep our patients, visitors, and staff as safe as possible. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Please talk with your nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

#### **Questions?**

Your questions are important. Please talk with the nurse manager of your unit if you have any questions about our Visitors Policy during the COVID-19 outbreak.