

Visitor Precautions and Guidelines at Greater Regional Health

Visting Hours: 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM

At Greater Regional Health, our top priority is the safety of our patients, staff, and visitors. To prevent the spread of harmful, contagious germs, specific precautions are taken when patients have or are suspected of having certain infections. We appreciate your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines, which are intended to mitigate the spread of disease, including but not limited to influenza, COVID-19, tuberculosis, and rhinosinusitis.

Please note that while our general visiting hours are from **7:00 am to 8:00 pm**, and there are typically no age or time restrictions for visitors in general inpatient care areas, **visitation may be limited or prohibited due to infection control issues**. The number of visitors and length of visits are subject to change based on infection control needs.

General Requirements for All Visitors:

Before entering patient care areas, and throughout your visit, please observe the following:

- **Self-Screening and Illness:**
 - **Visitors must be free from any signs of illness** and should not be at high risk for severe disease.
 - Upon entry, you will be asked to sign in, confirming you do not have signs or symptoms such as fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or known exposure to a COVID-19 positive person.
 - Visitors will be screened for signs of illness as determined by our mitigation strategy.
 - Please place a **VISITOR sticker** in a visible location on your person after screening. If your sticker is not visible, you will be asked to re-sign in.
- **Hand Hygiene:**
 - **Clean your hands frequently**, especially when entering and exiting a patient's room.
 - You can use hand sanitizer or wash with soap and water.

- When cleaning hands with soap and water, wet hands with warm water, dispense one measure of soap into your palm, lather by rubbing hands together for 15 seconds covering all surfaces, rinse thoroughly, dry hands with a paper towel, and use the towel to turn off the faucet.
- When cleaning hands with alcohol gel, dispense one measure into the palm of one dry hand and rub hands together covering all surfaces until dry, about 15 to 20 seconds.
- **Masking and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**
 - **A universal masking policy (IC#13) is followed by all visitors when in common spaces** such as hallways, the cafeteria, and waiting rooms throughout the GRH campus.
 - **Visitors must follow other instructions for PPE as required**, especially when entering a patient's room.
 - **All visitors shall comply with appropriate PPE during their entire stay.**

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

Step 1:

Before you visit your family member in their room, it is important to **wash your hands** to prevent the spread of infection.

Wash Your Hands



Step 2:

Put on a gown. The gown helps prevent germs from getting on your clothes or skin. This prevents germs from spreading. The gown should be tied in the back.

Put on Gown



Step 3:

Put gloves on both hands. The correct size gloves for your hands should cover your entire palm and wrist. Although gloves help prevent germs from getting onto your hands, the gloves can still spread germs. Gloves protect you, and also protect other people that you come into contact with.

Put on Gloves



AFTER YOUR VISIT

Step 1:

Before you leave the patient's room, **untie and remove the gown**. Fold the gown inside out as you remove it. Try not to touch the outer surface where germs may be. Place the gown into the trash can.

Remove Gown



Remove Gloves



Step 2:

Remove the gloves one at a time. Try not to touch the outside of the gloves with your bare hands. Place the gloves in the trash can.

Wash Your Hands



Step 3:

Wash your hands. This helps prevent the spread of infection after you leave the room.

- **Movement and Common Areas:**
 - **Limit your movement within the facility and avoid common areas.**
 - Do not go into the rooms of other patients.

Specific Precautions for Patients on Isolation:

When patients have or are suspected of having harmful, contagious germs, specific "transmission-based isolation precautions" are implemented to prevent their spread. These precautions are used for conditions like influenza, COVID-19, tuberculosis, and rhinosinusitis.

For patients on these precautions, a sign will be placed on their room door to inform staff and visitors what to do. **Please ensure you read the sign on the patient's door before entering.**

Limited visitors are allowed for inpatients on transmission-based isolation precautions.

- **For Adult patients on transmission-based infection precautions: One visitor at a time is permitted.**
- **For Minor patients on transmission-based infection precautions: Two visitors at a time are permitted.**

Here are the specific types of precautions you may encounter:

1. Airborne Isolation Precautions:

- **Used when you have a lung or throat infection or virus**, such as chickenpox or tuberculosis, that can be spread via tiny droplets in the air from your mouth or nose. These germs may stay suspended in the air and can spread to others.
- The patient's room will have negative air pressure, meaning air flows into your room but won't flow out into the hall when the door is open.
- **Keep the room door closed at all times.**
- **Limit visitors to a few family members and friends who have immunity to the illness.**
- **Confirm that you have been vaccinated or have had the patient's disease to develop immunity.**
- If you have any questions, please go to the nurse's station.

2. Contact Precautions:

- **Used when you have harmful germs that can spread when people touch you or your environment.**
- Hospital staff will wear gloves and gowns when entering your room.
- **Limit visitors to a few family members and friends.**
- **Avoid contact with dressings, tubes, bed sheets, and other items the patient may touch.**
- Do not go into the rooms of other patients.
- If you have any questions, please go to the nurse's station.

3. Droplet Precautions:

- **Used when you have or may have germs in your lungs or throat**, such as those caused by the flu, that can spread by droplets from your mouth or nose when you speak, sneeze, or cough, as well as when people touch the surfaces around you.
 - Hospital staff will wear a mask and eye protection.
 - **Wear a mask and eye protection before entering the room and while visiting.**
 - **Limit visitors to a few family members and friends.**
 - **Brothers and sisters of pediatric patients on droplet precautions are discouraged from visiting and may not visit communal areas.**
 - If you have any questions, please go to the nurse's station.
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We understand that these precautions may alter your visiting experience, but they are crucial for protecting our patients and the community. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. For more information, you may refer to the CDC Isolation Guide 2007 Appendix A.

This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor or other health care provider. We encourage you to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your provider.
