

Visitor Guidelines: Important messages for hospital visitors

Updated Dec 23, 2020

Niagara Health welcomes visitors to our sites to support the care of your loved ones. These guidelines are in place for everyone's safety and must be followed.

We appreciate your cooperation during the COVID pandemic.

Visitors who do not comply with these guidelines will be asked to leave.

INPATIENT VISITING POLICY:

- Only one visitor per patient is allowed during designated visiting hours (11 a.m. – 3 p.m., 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.)
- Visitors must stay in the room with your loved one for the duration of your visit.
- Only leave the unit you are visiting if you are prepared to conclude your visit.
- Visitors cannot enter a unit in outbreak. Speak with the unit manager for exceptions for compassionate reasons.

VISITATION POLICY FOR CLINIC VISITS, DAY SURGERY AND OTHER OUTPATIENT SERVICES:

- Patients coming for clinic visits, day surgery and other outpatient services should come alone. This includes Diagnostic Imaging (e.g. X-rays, CT scans), the Walker Family Cancer Centre and Dialysis Units. Team members will assist patients as needed.
- In special circumstances, the unit or clinic manager may approve a support person to accompany a patient to an outpatient clinic appointment. Any exception to the visitor restrictions must be approved **in advance** by the manager

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT (ED)/URGENT CARE CENTRE (UCC) VISITOR POLICY:

- Visitors/care providers may only accompany patients in the ED or UCC if they are supporting patients:
 - in life altering circumstances.
 - experiencing a mental health crisis.
 - at end of life.
 - who are vulnerable. This includes those under 18 years of age, cognitive or developmentally delayed, and those with severe language impairment.
- At triage, the nursing staff will assess whether the visitor/support person may accompany a patient in the ED/UCC based on the special circumstances outlined above.

Visit [our website](#) for more information, including a list of [frequently asked questions](#)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL VISITORS

ALL VISITORS MUST:

- be 18 years of age or older.
- pass screening. We encourage you to fill out the screening form in advance. It is available on our website.
- provide their name and contact information for contact tracing, if needed.
- follow signage and directions provided by screeners.

MASKING:

- Visitors must wear a mask properly (over the nose, mouth and chin) and at all times while inside the hospital. This includes:
 - all public spaces, including elevators and waiting room areas.
 - patient rooms, whether private or shared.
 - in the presence of a healthcare worker.



HYGIENE AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING:

- Visitors must maintain a safe physical distance of six feet (two metres) from others and follow guidelines that limit the number of people in rooms, elevators, waiting rooms and other common areas.
- Please remember to wash your hands at every opportunity and especially before you enter the unit or patient room and as you leave the room/hospital.

FOOD AND DRINK:

- To avoid removal of masks, eating and drinking by caregivers/ support persons/ visitors is not allowed in patient rooms, waiting rooms or on units.
- Any food brought in by caregivers/ support persons/ visitors for patients must be individually packaged and not shared. Leftovers must be discarded.
- Our staff are unable to deliver food to patients.
- Only eat in designated cafeteria areas and while six feet (two metres) away from others.
- If you are purchasing food at the hospital, only do so before or after your visit.

GIFTS:

- Any gifts for patients must be individually packaged.
- Our staff are unable to deliver gifts to patients. Please bring them with you during visiting hours.

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