

WHAT WILL VISITING THE HOSPITAL BE LIKE?

[Here's a helpful tip sheet for what we'll need you to do once you are approved as an Essential Care Partner and while you're visiting our hospital sites.](#)

What happens if I am approved to visit?

If you're approved, your name will be added by the unit or clinic to a list of approved Essential Care Partners for the day of your approved visit.

At the entrance, there is a team of people screening everyone who comes in. They ask each visitor, patient and staff member whether they have symptoms of COVID-19, and a series of other questions. The entrance screening team will ask for your name when you arrive and for your identification.

[This infographic outlines the screening process at our hospitals.](#)

Depending on the area you are coming to, you may be asked to come at a scheduled time. We will give you an ID sticker and a mask when you arrive.

Staff on the unit/clinic you are going to will provide you with some of these instructions before you arrive, and some will be discussed once you get to the hospital.

Is it safe for me to visit a patient in the hospital as an Essential Care Partner?

Our hospital is safe for our patients, Essential Care Partners who visit, and staff. We are all working hard to ensure the safety and well-being of our patients and those providing care to them during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the steps we've taken include:

- Limiting visitors and the number of people in the hospital
- Checking and screening for symptoms of COVID-19 at entrances
- Using masks and appropriate personal protective equipment
- Putting physical distancing in place

[This infographic outlines the key steps we're taking to keep you safe.](#)

What steps do I need to take when visiting a patient?

All Essential Care Partners will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering. This means that at the door, our staff will ask you a series of questions. You will also be asked to show identification.

If you pass the screening and enter our hospital, you'll be asked to wear a mask, clean your hands frequently and maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others when possible.

When you are visiting, please stay with the patient at all times (at the bedside or at their appointment) and do not visit other clinical or common areas of the building.

If I am approved as an Essential Care Partner who can visit, which entrance should I use?

- At Providence, please use the main doors at 3276 St. Clair Ave. East.
- At St. Joseph's, you can use Tranquility, Melnyk, East or Our Lady of Mercy entrances depending on where you are going. Information about when these entrances are open can be [found online here](#).
- At St. Michael's, please use the Queen Street entrance at 36 Queen Street East.

Can I bring my own mask?

We encourage you to wear your own mask when you enter the hospital and for your entire visit within the hospital. The mask must completely cover your nose and mouth. If you don't have your own mask upon entry, you will receive a mask.

If you are visiting a patient who has special instructions for visiting:

- You will need to wear a mask the unit/clinic team staff provide you on the unit
- You may be asked to wear other protective equipment - the staff on the unit will provide you with this and show you how to put it on

Please clean your hands before putting on a mask and wear it properly at all times. [This infographic outlines how to wear a mask properly.](#)

Where can I go when I visit the hospital?

As an Essential Care Partner you are requested to remain with your loved one in their rooms. You are not allowed to eat or drink while in the hospitals as this requires removing your face mask. We also request that you don't visit our cafeterias, gift shop or lounges.

Is it safe to use the bathroom in the hospital?

While you are in the hospital, use washrooms dedicated for Essential Care Partners only. Staff will inform you which ones to use.

[This infographic has a step-by-step guide on how to wash your hands thoroughly.](#)

Can I participate in my loved one's care activities when I visit?

Visiting a Patient

Unity Health Toronto website, printer-friendly frequently asked questions

In some cases, it may be beneficial for you to help with some care activities (such as bathing, feeding and changing clothes). Ask the nurse about how you may assist and what safety practices are needed.

Certain care activities (such as toileting, suctioning) are not permitted.

For COVID-19 isolated patients (positive, patients who are suspected to have COVID, or those who have been exposed), you are NOT permitted to participate in any care activities.

If I am an Essential Care Partner in the Emergency Department, will I be able to stay with my loved one if they move to an inpatient area of the hospital?

Depending on which unit the patient you are visiting is being moved to, you may not be able to stay with them. The criteria for supporting Essential Care Partners in our inpatient areas is different from our Emergency Departments. The team will assist you in understanding the criteria for different inpatient areas while you are in the Emergency Department with your loved one.

Am I allowed to bring food or belongings in to the patient?

To minimize opportunities for transmission of the virus, **personal belongings and food are not to be brought in to patients**. Some basic essential items are allowed. If the patient requires essential items, you or the patient can contact our Patient Relations team and they can arrange to have these items sanitized and delivered to the patient.

- St. Joseph's: 416-530-6652 or patientrelationsSJHC@unityhealth.to
- St. Michael's: 416-864-5215 or patientrelationsSMH@unityhealth.to
- Providence: 416-285-3666 ext. 4555 or patientrelationsPHC@unityhealth.to

Food is not permitted into the hospital for patients at this time. This includes any pre-packaged snacks or food. The only exceptions to this is culturally required food or specialty food necessary for the patient's care plan and recovery that is not provided by Food Services, and has been approved by the health-care team.