

UW Medicine

November 17, 2020

To Our Valued Patients and Their Families:

UW Medicine's patient care philosophy depends greatly on engaging families in the healing process. However, due to the recent and rapid increases in COVID-19 cases in our community, we are imposing restrictions on visitors for your safety and the safety of our employees.

Beginning Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020, we are restricting visitation within our UW Medicine hospitals and clinics. All routine visiting is being suspended until the transmission of COVID-19 is no longer a threat. Visitation also is limited by each hospital's policies.

The decision to restrict visitation is difficult and made only after careful consideration. We also recognize that there are times when having a visitor or family member present is crucial.

Hospital inpatient visitors will be allowed based on the following exceptions:

- Patients who are under the age of 18 may have 1 visitor, or parent or guardian.
- Obstetrics patients may have 1 healthy support person with them during labor. Before and after labor, patients may have 1 visitor. Patients may bring their newborns to their postpartum clinic visits.
- Patients who need a caregiver for safety because of their mental, developmental status, or for their disability such as blindness and/or hearing loss may have 1 caregiver.
- Patients undergoing surgery or procedures may have 1 visitor. Once the surgery or procedure is over and the physician has discussed the findings with the visitor (as appropriate), the visitor must leave the medical center.
- Patients may have a home caregiver who needs to be trained as their single visitor.
- Patients who are visiting the Emergency Department may have 1 person with them.
- Community-based care providers who are involved in the care of the patient may visit in addition to the patient's 1 visitor for support and care continuity.
- Patients who are at the end of life may have 2 visitors.
- **Children under the age of 16 will not be allowed except under extraordinary circumstances.**

UW Medicine outpatient clinics will allow visitors based on the following exceptions:

- Patients under the age of 18 may have 1 adult accompany them.
- Other patients who need a caregiver due to a disability may have 1 adult accompany them.
- Postpartum patients may bring their newborns.
- **Children under the age of 16 will not be allowed except under extraordinary circumstances.**

Please note that all allowed visitors in the hospitals and clinics will be subject to the following additional restrictions:

- *Visitors cannot have tested positive or been in contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days.*
- *Visitors will only be allowed if they do not have symptoms of COVID-19: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.*
- *In hospitals, visitors must follow masking requirements and cannot bring food or drink in with them. They must stay in the patient's room the entire time of the visit. Once the visitor leaves the patient room, they must leave the medical center.*
- *In outpatient clinics, patients and visitors must follow masking requirements and cannot consume food or beverages during their visit, including lobby areas.*

We appreciate your understanding during these difficult times. Our goal is to protect you, your family and friends, and our staff. We look forward to resuming visitation when COVID-19 is no longer a threat to the health of our community.

Sincerely,

Lisa Brandenburg

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