



# Preventing the Spread of Infection

*When visiting patients in isolation*

**Patients are placed in “precautions” at University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) when they have a bacteria or virus that could be passed to others.**

Patients are placed in “precautions” because they have a bacteria or virus that could be passed to others. Infection can be spread through the air and by contact with clothing, hands, personal items, or health care equipment.

For your protection, please follow the instruction on the signs.

## Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the first line of defense to protect you and others. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water (if they look dirty) or use a hand cleaning gel when you enter and leave a patient’s room.

Watch your children carefully if they are visiting. They should not touch items in a patient’s room. Help them wash their hands, or use hand gel, when they enter and leave the room.

## Follow These General Precautions

- Read and follow the instructions on the sign posted on the door.
- Please feel free to ask questions or share concerns with the nurse and other health care workers caring for your family member or friend.
- If protective gear is not available or you need help putting on protective equipment, please go to the nurse’s station for help.
- Visitors who do not comply with the precautions instructions cannot spend time in common areas at the medical center, such as the cafeteria (Plaza Café), Gift Shop, Nutrition Rooms, or Oncology Family Room.

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

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- There may be situations in which a visitor or caregiver needs to remain at the medical center between periods of caring or being with a loved one. In this case, the visitor or caregiver should perform hand hygiene and put on a clean gown when in the precautions room.
- If the visitor or caregiver has been exposed to or is susceptible to the droplet or airborne disease for which the patient has been placed in precautions, they should wear a surgical or procedural mask when not in the precautions room.
- If you bring food to the patient, discard any uneaten portions.
- Patients in “precautions” may not enter the nutrition rooms where food is normally stored. If you want to use the nutrition room, please ask a staff member for help.
- Soiled clothing and other personal items should be placed in a plastic bag. After sealing the bag, you may take the items home and dry clean them or wash and dry them as usual.
- Household bleach diluted per the instructions on the label is an effective disinfectant.

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