

# What Do Inpatients With Cancer Need to Know About COVID-19?

## What do I need to know about COVID-19 if I'm being treated for cancer?

Some treatments for cancer, especially chemotherapy and radiation therapy, can weaken the immune system during and after therapy. The immune system can stay weakened for weeks after treatment. You may have a higher risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 or having more serious symptoms if you do get it. Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19.

## What is LHSC doing to keep me safe?



Staff and patients are being carefully screened when they arrive at all hospital entrances. We appreciate your patience as you go through these new processes. The screening processes may change as we learn more about the virus. Find up-to-date information on our screening process at [www.lhsc.on.ca/coronavirus](http://www.lhsc.on.ca/coronavirus)

## Can someone visit me while I am in the hospital?

In order to keep LHSC safe for patients, families and staff, LHSC is following direction from Ontario Health and temporarily limiting family/caregiver presence inside of the hospital. This means that unless you receive approval in advance, you cannot have someone visit you while you are in the hospital. Space is limited in the hospital to allow for physical distancing (staying 6 feet apart).

At this time, all requests for family/caregiver to visit a loved one on the Oncology Inpatient Unit must be pre-approved. You must speak with your provider (physician, nurse practitioner, nurse or social worker) and ask that they submit a request for a visitor. Visitors should have their visit approved prior to coming to the hospital. It is not always possible to approve a visit at the entrance screening desks. Requests for visitors are reviewed by leadership on the Oncology Inpatient Unit. Only those requests that fit the criteria in the LHSC visitor policy are approved. Oncology patients are a high-risk population and safety is the first priority; therefore visitors are not guaranteed.



If you are unable to visit a loved one while they are in the hospital, you can set up a virtual visit. Visit <https://www.lhsc.on.ca/coronavirus/visiting-the-hospital> for more information.

## What do my visitors need to know if they come to see me in the hospital?

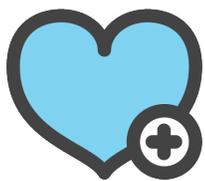
Visitors are asked to go directly to the room they are visiting and not walk the halls. This helps to reduce everyone's risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Washrooms in patient rooms are for patients' use only. You can speak to a nurse on the unit to learn more about the availability of visitor washrooms.

Changes may need to be made to a previously scheduled visit at any time to maintain the safety of staff and patients.

## Staying connected to your loved ones while you are in the hospital

- If you have a mobile device (i.e. iPhone, iPad, smartphone), you can use video calling to stay connected with your loved ones at home.
- If you do not have a mobile device, please mention this to a member of your health team and LHSC can provide you with a temporary device.
- You can include family members and caregivers in conversations with your health care team using speakerphone or video chat.
- If your loved one has further questions or concerns about the medical care you are receiving in hospital, please choose one family member or caregiver who can connect with the nursing staff on the unit.
- Ask your loved ones to send you pictures or messages each day.
- If your visitor request is approved, family members/caregivers can bring a care package for you. Please provide a list of the items you will need well in advance of your visit. At this time, staff cannot pick up non-essential care packages for patients from family/caregivers on days where there isn't an approved visit.

## A message from your health care team



Please reach out to members of your health care team if you are struggling. It helps to have someone to talk to and we will do what we can to support you. We understand that COVID-19 adds additional stress for you and your loved ones, especially because they cannot visit you as often as they would like. It may be a while before things settle into a new normal. Until then, we will do our best to help you and your loved ones.