



Providence Health & Services in Oregon is taking special steps during this flu season to protect our patients, families, and friends. We know that pregnant women, young children, and other vulnerable persons who are being treated in our hospitals face increased risk if they are exposed to the flu virus.

Flu vaccinations are the single most effective prevention against flu, and are safe and recommended during pregnancy. Please speak with your provider about vaccination for you and your family.

If flu cases reach high levels in our communities, Providence Oregon hospitals will follow these guidelines to protect our patients:

For Labor and Delivery, Post-partum, Nursery, Pediatrics, Neonatal Intensive Care, Pediatric Intensive Care, Adult Intensive Care, Solid Organ and Bone Marrow Transplant, Oncology, and Burn units:

- Visitors must be 12 years of age or older. Exceptions are made for well children who are immediate family members of the patient.
- Visitors, family members, and siblings with cold- or flu-like symptoms are asked to stay home because they are a risk to our patients. Exceptions are made for parents of the child and essential caregivers. The care team will show them how to safely provide care.
- Visitors not essential to the patient's emotional well-being and care are asked to not visit during this period. This prevents accidentally spreading the flu or other illness to our patients.
- Please be aware that people can spread the virus up to 24 hours before they have symptoms.
- Healthy newborns will room with their mothers to limit any potential exposure.
- The neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) may have additional guidelines.

For other areas of the hospital outside of patient care units:

- Visitors must be 12 years of age or older. Exceptions are made for well children who are immediate family members of the patient.
- Persons or patients who enter the hospital premises and who have a fever plus a cough or sore throat should wear a mask to protect others. These are available at all hospital entrances.
- Hand sanitizer is available throughout the hospital for all visitors and staff to use.
- Hospital staff will take extra care to prevent viruses from being spread between patients. This may include wearing gowns, masks, gloves, and other precautions.
- We will separate patient care areas, when necessary, to help prevent the spread of viruses.
- There are no visitor restrictions to patients receiving end-of-life care, but we will ask those visitors to remain in the patient room and take appropriate precautions.

How you can help:

- Please ask any visitors who do not feel well or have flu symptoms to **stay at home**.
- Please do not bring non-sibling children under the age of 12 to our maternity units. If possible, please make arrangements for care of other siblings prior to going into labor.
- Tell your visitors about these restrictions. Ask visitors to wait to see you when you return home.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and ask visitors to do the same.
- Wash or gel your hands frequently, especially when you enter and leave a patient room.
- If you are an essential caregiver but are feeling sick, please let the staff know. They will gladly provide you with a mask, gown, and gloves to protect the patient while visiting. You must stay in the patient room while in the hospital.

For more information, please talk with your care team or contact our information desk.

These temporary steps will help us provide the safest care for you and all those who come to our hospital. Thank you for your help in protecting all the people who come through our doors.