



Important Phone Numbers

- Medical ICU (MICU): ext. 5008
- Surgical ICU (SICU): ext. 5663

For ICU Visitors

When your loved one is in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), it is normal not to know what to expect. You will have many questions. This brochure is designed to help you understand what is happening and what you can do while your loved one is in the ICU.

What Should I Expect

Your loved one may have multiple tubes and wires in place. Most of the devices you may see are temporary and will be removed as the patient gets better. These tubes and wires are there to help monitor your loved one at all times day and night.

Ventilator: Your loved one may be on a ventilator, also called a “breathing machine.” The ventilator is a temporary machine used to assist your loved one with breathing. Your loved one will not be able to speak to you while on the ventilator because of the position of the tube passing the vocal cords.

Noise: All of these tubes, wires and machines are very noisy. Please do not become alarmed with the noises and beeps, they are all very normal sounds you will hear in the ICU.

Members of the ICU Healthcare Team

You may see many staff members entering your loved one’s room. They all play an important role in delivering the highest standard of care to your loved one. These staff members include:

- **Intensivists** are critical-care internal medicine physicians able to provide comprehensive medical care to patients whose illnesses or injuries require close monitoring in a cross section of disciplines.
- **Attending Physicians** actively participate and supervise the care of your loved one.
- **Residents** are doctors who are working in collaboration with attending physicians as part of their training.
- **Registered Nurses** care for your loved ones at the bedside around-the-clock.

UNDERSTANDING THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (ICU)

- **Respiratory Therapists** manage breathing needs and oxygen requirements.
- **Case Managers** organize care and help assess discharge needs.
- **Social Workers** support the patient and family during hospitalization and in planning discharge.
- **Pharmacists** process medications ordered by the physician.
- **Nutritionists** assess and care for nutritional needs.
- **Secretaries** serve as the means of communication between families and staff.

Visiting a Patient in ICU

Although visiting is permitted around the clock for immediate family, there are certain times during the day that we encourage quiet time to promote a restful healing environment for your loved one. Please talk to the nurse for more details.

Suggested Family Guidelines:

- Please go to the Family Lounge first and using the phone on the left-hand side of the wall, call the ICU nursing station to visit your loved one
- A maximum of three visitors at one time are allowed
- We highly recommend that children under the age of 15 do not visit in the ICU
- No food or beverages are permitted in the patient rooms

During The Visit

We recommend purchasing a small notebook to keep at the bedside with important numbers of the healthcare team and the questions that may arise as you visit your loved one.

Keep your faith and hope strong. Be encouraging while speaking to your loved one. If your loved one is not alert, always start your visit with your name.

Talk to your loved one and let him/her know what is happening. Read cards that have been sent. All of these things help with recovery.

Patients receive cues from you-if you are rested and seem positive, they will be positive too.

Using The Communications Boards

A white communications board and a “Get to Know Me” board in each room allows for two-way communication between staff and families. The boards will help families to identify individual caregivers and also enable staff members to get to know your loved one.

The white board will display the name of the RN caring for the patient on the current shift and will also have a set of daily goals for the patient.

For the “Get to Know Me Board,” you are welcome to bring in photos and fill in any information that will help us to become familiar with your loved one.

Identifying A Care Partner



It is beneficial to the patient, family and staff if you can identify a Care Partner to serve as the primary contact for communication and decisions regarding the patient. This individual will have greater access to information on the patient’s progress, and will partner with staff members and physicians to ensure the most effective plan of care. This person will be encouraged to contact all relatives and friends who need to be reached each day for an update on the patient’s condition. This will help to lessen the calls placed to staff members and will allow them to spend more time at the bedside.

Please ask your nurse for more information on becoming a Care Partner.

Taking Care Of Yourself

Take care of yourself by getting plenty of rest and eating well as you will be relied upon as an active member of your loved one’s healthcare team. This will help your ability to listen and understand all the significant information being given to you.