

NIH Clinical Center Patient Education Materials

Welcome to 3 Northwest (3NW)

Medical and Surgical Oncology Inpatient Unit

Contact Information

Phone: 301-451-0789

Visiting Hours

9a.m. - 9p.m.

The Clinical Research Nurses on 3NW Inpatient Unit care for adults are enrolled in a variety of National Institutes of Health (NIH) research studies. Our team works together to give you the best care during your time at the Clinical Center. Here is some information about what you and your family can expect.

What happens when you arrive?

Please tell us right away if you have:

- Signs of infections (fever, runny nose, diarrhea)
- A history of being on isolation
- Respiratory (breathing) symptoms; if so, please ask for a mask and put it on right away
- MRSA, VRE, CRE, KPC or any other similar infection (or a history of these infections)

What are isolation precautions?

If you have a disease that could spread to others, then we may ask you to wear a mask while in the hospital. You may also need to follow rules about leaving the room. Your nurse or doctor will explain what to do. By following these rules, your family can help stop the spread of diseases.

Do you need identification?

We will give you an ID bracelet to wear on your wrist. Please understand that you need to keep it on at all times. The ID bracelet will serve as identification for lab collection and medication administration at NIH.

What should you bring with you?

Please bring an up-to-date list of your medicines and dosages with you, including over-the-counter and herbal medications and vitamin supplements. Let your nurse know if you have any drug allergies.

If you did bring in medicine, take it home with you, or give it to your nurse. If you need medicine, our doctors will prescribe it. You should stop using any medicines or supplements that you brought from home. If your NIH doctor prescribes medicines to take home that are related to your research study, they will be filled at the Outpatient Pharmacy on the first floor. The hours are:

- Monday –Thursday: 8:30a.m. - 6p.m.
- Friday: 8:30a.m. - 8p.m.
- Weekends and Holidays: 8:30a.m. - 12:30p.m.

What can you expect during your visit?

We offer many kinds of treatments, including:

- Cancer surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Immunotherapy
- Radiation therapy

A nurse will check your vital signs (like temperature and blood pressure) throughout the day. In the morning, a nurse may also check your weight.

Twice each day at around the same time, doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals will visit you to talk about your health and your progress. They will make sure that you understand your disease, medications, treatment, and any issues that come up. These visits are a great time to ask questions and share your concerns.

You will need tests like x-rays or blood tests for both the research study and your medical care. Your doctor or nurse will talk to you about why you need the test and what happens before, during, and after the test.

For some tests and procedures, you will need to sign a consent (permission) form. Your doctor will ask you to sign the form before we do the test. If you have any questions, please ask your doctor.

What happens if you need to go to the intensive care unit?

If you need closer monitoring, we may move you to the 3SW-S intensive care unit (ICU). In the ICU, you can get special medications and care that we cannot give you in this unit.

If you need an operation, your doctor may plan for you to go right from the operating room to the ICU. Your nurse can set up a tour of the ICU before, and you can talk with an ICU nurse about what to expect.

If you go into surgery, the nursing staff can lock up your suitcase, clothing, and other belongings until you come back. You can also give your belongings to your family to keep while you are in surgery.

Are computers, TVs, and phones available?

Computers, televisions/Xbox's, and telephones are available in each patient room, and you may make free local calls and use the wireless internet. An activity room is located in 3-2740. The room has comfortable chairs, a computer, a television, magazines, and books.

How do you receive meals?

You can use the menu in your room to choose your meals. We will serve all meals and drinks in your room between 6:30a.m. and 6:30p.m. To order, press 3 on the phone in your room, or call 301-451-FOOD (301-451-3663). Please remember that meals are only for patients, not visitors.

If you bring food from home, or if you want to save food from one of your meals, please label it with your name and date. You can put your food in the refrigerator in the patient refreshment area. This area has:

- A refrigerator, microwave, and ice machine
- Instant coffee, tea bags, and hot chocolate
- Condiments (like sweeteners, salt, and pepper)
- Cereal, crackers, and instant soups

Food may also be purchased in vending machines throughout the Clinical Center and in cafeterias and cafes. There are also many restaurants in Bethesda, about two miles from the hospital.

What are the rules about visitors?

A visitor may accompany a patient to the designated unit, into the room of the patient whom they are visiting, and into common rooms (lounges, cafeterias, playrooms). Please keep in mind:

- Visitors who have been recently exposed to an infectious disease (for example, impetigo, chickenpox, tuberculosis, hepatitis) may not visit.
- Visitors with cold or flu symptoms are discouraged from visiting.
- Visitors must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer when coming in and leaving your room to prevent spreading germs.
- The bathroom in your room is only for you and other patients. Visitors should use the Clinical Center's public bathrooms.
- NIH is a smoke-free campus. If you have any questions about our smoking policy, please talk to your health care team. The NIH police may fine anyone who smokes on the NIH property.
- If you have a roommate, your visitors cannot stay overnight in your room. If they need help finding a place to stay, ask your nurse to contact your social worker.
- If you have children visiting, your nurse will ask you to fill out a Health Screening Tool. This is to make sure that your young visitors have had all of their vaccines and do not have germs that could spread to other patients.

How can you do laundry?

If you need to do laundry, you can use the free washers and dryers just outside of our unit. We can provide powdered detergent, but you can bring your own detergent if you prefer. Dryer sheets are not available.

What if you have health problems at home?

When you leave the unit, you will get a packet of information about your medications and how to care for yourself at home. Your nurse will also talk to you about any symptoms you should report.

Before you leave:

- Collect medications, valuables, and clothing that you gave the nurse when you checked in
- Make sure that you have the medications that you need
- Make sure that you know when your next appointment is

If you have an emergency while you are at home, call 911 right away.

If your concern is not an emergency and relates to your treatment at NIH, please use your contact list. If you have an urgent concern after regular business hours or during a holiday, call 301-451-0789, and we will get in touch with your NIH doctor or nurse.

Patient Portal

The patient portal provides patients with secure access to view selected medical information and the Patient Handbook online at any time.

To create your account, visit the website:

<http://patientportal.cc.nih.gov>

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

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