

NIH Clinical Center Patient Education Materials

Welcome to 3 Southwest South (3SW-S) Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

Contact Information

ICU Nursing Station: 301-451-0567
IMC Nursing Station: 301-451-0505
Fax: 301-480-3245

The Clinical Research Nurses on 3SW-S ICU care for children and adults who 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 assign one family member to receive information from the patient care team and communicate to family and friends. This helps to ensure confidentiality and accuracy of information.

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.

We suggest that you leave valuables (like jewelry or large sums of money) at home. If you do bring them, take them to the cashier on the first floor. The cashier will put them in a locked vault and give you a receipt.

What can you expect during your visit?

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 or procedure. If you have any questions, please ask your doctor. An exception to the requirement for informed consent occurs when an emergent, life-saving procedure is required.

Are computers, TVs, and phones available?

Computers, televisions, and telephones are available in each patient room, and you may make free local calls and use the wireless internet.

How do you receive meals?

You can use the menu in your room to choose your meals. We will serve all of your meals 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.

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 and into the room of the patient whom they are visiting. A parent or guardian of a pediatric patient may stay overnight in the child's room. 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.
- To provide privacy for all the patients, visitors should remain in the room or in the patient waiting area while visiting. Please do not stand in the hallway outside of patient rooms.
- 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 children under 12 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 send and receive mail?

We deliver mail Monday through Friday. Please ask family and friends to write "Patient Mail" on their envelopes and packages. They can send mail to:

Name
NIH Clinical Center Unit 3SW-S, MSC 1524
10 Center Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892

If you need to send mail from the unit, envelopes and stamps are available at the self-service post office near the bank on the B1 level.

Please consult with your nurse before sending flowers or plants to patients. Flowers and plants are not allowed inside patient rooms. They can carry germs that can be harmful to patients with low immune systems. Cards, letters, and pictures are welcome.

**What if you have health problems at home?
If you have an emergency while you are off the unit or once you are at home, call 911 right away.**

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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[Questions about the Clinical Center?](#)

