

Referring Patients for Hospital Care: COVID-19 Safety Points

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What is the hospital doing to help keep me safe?

The hospital is taking many extra precautions to help keep you safe. Everyone – patients, staff and doctors – are screened for symptoms. Masks are required. Physical distancing is required wherever possible. Surfaces and equipment are sanitized multiple times a day.

How is the hospital sanitized?

Our clinical staff focuses on disinfecting and sanitizing high-traffic and high-touch areas. Every exam room and all equipment are disinfected thoroughly between patients. We disinfect all hard surfaces, and we have added more hand-sanitizing stations throughout our facilities. We also use disinfectant to sanitize large spaces and our waiting rooms.

Will I be near someone with possible COVID-19 symptoms?

Patients with possible COVID-19 symptoms are isolated and treated separately from other patients.

Are doctors and staff tested for COVID-19?

All staff and doctors are screened each day for symptoms, and if they have a symptom they are not allowed to come to work. We require staff to follow strict infection-prevention measures every day.

Why do I need to get a COVID test before my procedure?

An illness such as COVID-19 could affect your health and the outcome of your procedure. It's best to have procedures when your immune system is not fighting a virus. For this same reason, we take temperatures of patients before surgery, and may postpone a procedure if the patient has a fever from a severe cold or flu. An evaluation by a clinician is required to determine if you need a COVID-19 test.

If you meet testing criteria, your doctor or a clinician will order a test and refer you to a testing site.

Why do I need to wear a mask?

The coronavirus is most commonly spread in respiratory droplets released when someone coughs, sneezes or even talks. Masks have been proven to reduce the risk of transmission. For the safety of patients and staff, the hospital requires everyone to wear face masks. Exceptions may be made for patients who have severe difficulty breathing, and for the very young.

May I have visitors while I'm in the hospital?

It is critical to protect our patients and healthcare workers. Visitors may unwittingly pass the virus to staff and patients, even when they aren't showing symptoms. Thus, hospitals allow a limited number of visitors, typically one visitor for each patient per day. Moms in labor may also have two visitors a day, typically their partner and a coach.

What if my child has to go to the hospital?

Children typically stay on a pediatric unit, away from adults. Nurses and staff follow the same strict safety precautions that are used throughout the hospital. Children and babies may have two visitors at a time, usually their parents or caregivers. Although masks are required for teens and adults throughout our care centers, children under age 2 should not wear a mask. Masks are optional for children age 3-12. If you choose to have your child wear a mask, you can use a personal cloth mask or use a mask that we will provide.

If you have more questions, please visit our COVID-19 Resources page at sutterhealth.org/covid-19