Isolated in hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic

You are suspected or diagnosed to have COVID-19. It is important that you read the following information to help you understand what will happen next.

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand, talk to the staff caring for you

What is COVID-19?
COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus. It is a viral infection that has respiratory symptoms similar to a cold or flu, like a sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath. Some people with coronavirus will also have a fever, or develop more severe symptoms such as pneumonia.

Why am I in isolation?
It is important to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, so it is necessary to care for you in a room by yourself. It is not always possible to tell how long you will need to be isolated for. The healthcare team will keep you informed about your progress.

What is PPE?
The healthcare team will wear a mask, gown and gloves when they come into your room. You might hear staff refer to this as PPE, which stands for Protective Personal Equipment. They wear this to prevent spreading COVID-19.

How can I help myself?
You must stay in your room unless a member of staff advises you otherwise.

If it is necessary for you to undergo investigations, procedures or treatments in another department, then you will be advised of this and taken there. Being in isolation should not delay your tests or appointments.

If you do leave your room, you will be supplied with a face mask. Make sure you also wash your hands or use the hand rub provided on leaving your room.

Should you require any help or assistance there is a call button by the bed, which you can press to request a nurse to come to your room.

Your meals will be delivered outside your room. Healthcare workers (for example, your nurse) will bring it inside for you. If there is a delay in your meal being bought into your room, please ring your call bell for assistance.
Changes on our wards

We have made changes to our wards to care for patients with COVID-19 in one place to minimise the risk of infection.

I am in a room without a bathroom, what should I do?

Unfortunately, not every single room has its own bathroom and/or toilet. It is very important that you do not leave your room. You will be provided with the necessary support and equipment for personal hygiene and toileting.

Visitors

To protect patients and staff from COVID-19, patients are no longer allowed to have visitors. This has been a difficult decision to make but keeping our patients, visitors and staff safe is a priority.

There are items I need from home, what should I do?

Personal hygiene items can be dropped off between the hours of 10.00am and 5.00pm to main reception. The item will then be taken to your room or cubicle.

Clothing - We suggest that you use the gowns supplied by the hospital. Your own clothing cannot be collected for washing at home.

Can I get food delivered to my room?

No. Food delivered from your family or friends or from food delivery companies such as Uber Eats is not currently accepted at any time. Talk with the healthcare team if you have any special dietary requirements and they can assist with your menu.

Stay connected

We understand how important your family and friends are to your health and wellbeing. It is important to stay in touch with them and keep them updated on your care.

Free Wi-Fi is available in this location. Follow these 3 steps:

1. Go to settings on your device and select Wi-Fi
2. Select AH-GUEST
3. Read and agree to policy

Ask staff if you need help with making a telephone or video call.
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**Stopping the spread of infection in hospital**

**Stay in your room or cubicle**

⚠️ You must stay in your room unless a member of staff advises you otherwise.

**Wash your hands**

Wash your hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. Dry with paper towel or hand dryer. Alternatively, you may use the hand gel.

The most important time to clean your hands is:
- Before eating and drinking
- After using the toilet.
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.

**Keeping safe in hospital**

Whilst in hospital during this time, it is important to remember things that you can do to keep safe.

**Be mindful of falling**

Falling over is more likely in hospital because you are in an unfamiliar place and may be physically weaker than usual. Remember to:
- Use the call bell to request for help to get out of bed or to go to the toilet
- If your healthcare team are happy for you to get out of bed, talk to a member of the team about how to safely move around your room and bathroom
- Talk to a member of the healthcare team if you feel worse than usual

**Care of your skin**

If you spend too long in one position you can develop sores on your skin. This slows down your recovery. Remember to:
- Keep your skin clean and moisturised
- Change your position every half an hour
- Get up and stand up and sit down but make sure you have the help you need to do this safely

**Hospital acquired infections**

**Remember** - There are many other infections that you can get while in hospital, many can be avoided with good hygiene practice.

If you get an infection you may have to stay in hospital longer. Please follow any advice given to you by your healthcare team to reduce the risk of getting an infection.

Do you need an interpreter?

Tell us if you need to talk to us in your preferred language. An interpreter can be included in a video conferencing call.
COVID-19: Your Care

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We recommend that you seek information only from credible websites such as:

Alfred Health
www.alfredhealth.org.au

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

Australian Government
www.health.gov.au

Last updated:
July 2020

Have your say
Tell us about your experience

Patient Experience Survey

1. Go to alfredhealth.org.au/survey
2. Select the service you used
3. Complete the survey

Get involved in your care

Communicating with you in new ways

We may use secure video conferencing to communicate with you in response to the challenges faced by physical distancing measures. This will reduce the risk of infection.

Staff will guide you through the process of using video conferencing and provide you with a device to do so.

Clinical staff may use video conferencing for:
- Medical Reviews with your Treating Doctor
- Allied health assessments
- Nursing updates
- Family/Carer meetings

Read the ‘Communicating with you in new ways’ fact sheet for more information. Ask staff for a copy.

Keeping your family and friends up to date

Your healthcare team can provide a care update to a contact person nominated by you. This may take longer than usual as we are increasingly caring for more patients.

Tell your nurse or doctor if you would like this to occur.

Ask your contact person to update other family members or friends you want kept informed about your progress

Staying active

Getting up and moving is important. It helps maintain muscle strength and fitness. There are chair and bed based exercises you can do so you do not have to leave your cubicle or room.

Talk to your healthcare team for more information

Your emotional wellbeing is important

We understand being in hospital is a stressful time and the pandemic may be creating additional concerns for you. It is important to look after your emotional wellbeing during this time.

Talking about how you are feeling with your family and friends may help. You can also talk to the staff looking after you.