COVID-19: Your Care

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic we have changed the way we do things, in order to keep our patients, visitors and staff safe. This fact sheet explains these changes and what you need to do whilst staying in hospital.

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

Changes on our wards

You may be concerned about staying in the same hospital as patients being treated for COVID-19. We would like to reassure you that patients with COVID-19 are being treated away from patients with other conditions.

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

In this guide

Page 1
Changes on our wards
- Visitors
- Deliveries
- Free Wi-Fi

Page 2-3
Stopping the spread of infection in hospital
- Physical distancing
- Hand hygiene
- Wearing a face mask
- Limiting your movement

Page 3
Keeping safe in hospital

Page 4
Get involved in your care
- Communication
- Staying active
- Mental wellbeing
COVID-19: Your Care

Stopping the spread of infection in hospital

1. Stay in your room or cubicle
We recommend you try to limit your movement around the ward and hospital. This means staying in your room or cubicle as much as possible.

*Talk to your nurse if there is a reason why you need to leave your room or cubicle*

Can I leave my room to exercise?
If you are wearing a face mask, it is ok to leave your cubicle or room. However, to reduce the risk of infection, we recommend you try to limit your movement around the ward and hospital.

My bathroom is being used, can I use another?
To limit the risk of infection, it is important to only use the bathroom that is assigned to your room or cubicle.

Can I sit in the patient lounge?
Visiting communal areas can increase the risk of getting an infection. We recommend staying in your room or cubicle as much as possible.

Try to leave your room or cubicle when the area is less busy, *early morning* or *evening*.

*Talk to your healthcare team for more information*

If you are in isolation, do not leave your room to move around the hospital. Please speak with your nurse or doctor.

2. 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.*

Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, or use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth.
3. Wearing a face mask

While you are in our care we ask you to wear a face mask if you:
- Leave your room or cubicle
- Are taken to another part of the hospital (e.g. bed move, or transfer to radiology or operating theatres)
- Cannot stay 1.5m away from people (physical distancing)

Read the Wearing a face mask FAQs for more information. Ask staff for a copy.

4. Physical Distancing

Maintain 1.5m physical distance wherever possible. Staff caring for you will be wearing a mask.

Struggling to hear staff when they are wearing a mask?

Tell them you can’t hear and ask them to repeat what was said. Ask them to write or draw what they are trying to tell you.

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

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. Follow any advice given to you by your healthcare team to reduce the risk of getting an infection.
Staying in hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic

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

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

Stay 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.

Remember – you can talk to the staff caring for you if you have any worries or fears

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