




POLICY

SECTION:	Administration	NUMBER:	ADM 08
APPROVED:	Chief Executive Officer 	ORIGINAL:	October 1973
		REVIEWED/REVISED:	December 2012

VISITING ACUTE OR EMERGENCY PATIENTS

Nipigon District Memorial Hospital acknowledges that the presence of family members and friends can be a great source of assistance for staff and comfort for the patients. At the Hospital, we welcome you and encourage your participation in the care of your loved one.

Although our patient visiting hours are not defined, they are limited from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am for special circumstances only. Respecting the need for rest and the comfort and privacy of another patient in the room, visitors will be limited to two at a time per patient. Medical and/or nursing staff may extend or restrict visiting based on a patient's condition. Parents of a paediatric patient may visit at any time and one parent is encouraged to stay overnight. When visiting, children must be appropriately supervised by an accompanying adult at all times.

The ER nurse will allow visitors depending on the condition of the patient. Parents may accompany a child. All other visitors for an emergency patient will be asked to wait in the ER Waiting room.

When precautions are posted at a patient's room, please check at the Acute or ER Nursing station prior to visiting.

Further visitor restrictions will apply in the event of an infectious outbreak.

Infections are illnesses that are caused by germs such as bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Patients in the hospital are already ill. Exposing them to these germs may make it harder for them to recover and go home. If you are visiting a friend or loved one, you need to take steps to prevent spreading germs. The best way to stop the spread of germs is to wash your hands often either with an alcohol based hand sanitizer or with warm soap and water. Make sure to keep your hands away from your face. Cough or sneeze into a tissue, or into the crease of your elbow, not into the air.

Clean your hands with alcohol based hand sanitizer -

- When you enter and leave a patient's room
- After using the bathroom
- After touching a patient

To clean your hands with soap and water -

- Wet your hands and wrists then apply soap.
- Scrub your hands together for at least 20 seconds so that the soap gets bubbly.
- Remove rings or scrub under them.
- Dry your hands with a clean paper towel.
- Do not touch the sink and faucets after you wash your hands. Use the paper towel to turn the water off and open the door.

Alcohol based hand sanitizer dispensers are found in each patient's room and throughout the Hospital. To clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer –

- Apply a dime-sized amount in the palm of one hand.
- Rub your hands together, making sure all surfaces on both sides of your hands are covered.
- Rub until your hands are dry.

Remind family, friends, and health care providers to wash their hands.

Stay Home If You Are Sick

You should stay home if you feel sick or have a fever. This will help protect everyone in the hospital. If you think you were exposed to chicken pox, the flu, or other infections, stay home. Remember, what may seem like just a little cold to you can be a big problem for someone in the hospital who is sick. Hospital patients who are very old, very young, or very ill are at the greatest risk of harm from illnesses such as colds and the flu.

Isolation

Anybody who visits a hospital patient who has an *Isolation sign* outside their door should stop at the nurses' station before entering the patient's room. Isolation precautions create barriers that help prevent the spread of germs in the hospital. They may be needed to protect you or the patient you are visiting.

When a patient is in isolation, visitors may –

- Need to wear gloves, a gown, a mask, and/or eye protection
- Need to avoid touching the patient
- Not be allowed into a patient's room at all

Visitor restrictions will apply in the event of an infectious outbreak.

Each department reserves the right to limit visitation and visitors may be asked to leave at any time. This policy is subject to change at any time.