



St. Francis Memorial Hospital News Release

VISITATION & HAND HYGIENE

We can all do our part to ensure a safe and healthy 2011 for everyone by sharing a few helpful reminders about our visitor's policy and tips on how to keep our patients on the road to a healthy recovery.

- A friendly smile is always a welcome sight for anyone admitted to the hospital, and the doors are always open to visitors in most units from **11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
- Please be respectful of neighbouring patients and keep distractions to an absolute minimum and we ask that family and friends do not overtire their loved ones.
- For the safety of all patients, visitation is not permitted if there are symptoms of fever, rash, cough, sneezing, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, recent contact with someone who has a transmittable disease or unvaccinated children who have had recent exposure to someone with chickenpox.
- We ask that there be a maximum of two visitors per patient, and all children under age 10 be accompanied by an adult.
- Trusty soap and water is great for removing surface dirt and grime, but doesn't necessarily kill all the germs. The alcohol-based hand sanitizer solution is most effective to kill bacteria and keep the bugs at bay. Your best plan of attack on germs and nasty viruses is to scrub thoroughly with soap, rinse with running water and then follow up with the hand sanitizer.

These are not just helpful tips for visitors to the hospital, but solid everyday hand hygiene practice to ensure your own health and wellness. Adopt these practices before handling food or eating, after using the washroom, after helping your child use the washroom or changing a diaper, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, after touching garbage—even after using your computer or electronic devices.

While out in public, it is smart to keep a compact-sized bottle of sanitizer in your purse or vehicle to apply after coming in contact with a number of commonly touched surfaces, like shopping carts, debit card machine keypads, door handles and so on.

“We monitor hand hygiene compliance rates for our staff and visitors,” says Gwen Brown, coordinator of Infection Control.

That's why there are hand sanitizer stations conveniently located throughout the hospital; you can't miss them affixed to the walls you enter the building. Kindly stop and rub the cleansing gel over your entire hands when you walk in, she asks.

Patients should take a moment to read the new patient safety poster displayed throughout the hospital, which reminds others to wash hands as one of the eight key strategies to safety, Brown points out.