

ISOLATION

What is this leaflet about?

The purpose of leaflet is to provide you with an understanding of the reasons why you have been placed in an isolation room or an isolation bay.

It does not give you information on the specific infection or condition which you have. You may already have been given a separate leaflet on your condition, but if you would like to discuss this with the Infection Control Team please ask the ward staff, who will be able to arrange this for you.

Why have I been moved into an isolation facility?

There are two main reasons why you have been moved into isolation:

- To prevent you spreading the infection to other patients and staff.
- To protect you from other patients if you have a condition or illness that makes you more vulnerable to infections. This is known as protective isolation.

Will I be in a single room?

You may be in a single room or you may be nursed in a bay with other patients who have a similar infection and are therefore not a risk either to you or from you.

What will hospital staff do?

This will depend on the type of infection you have. Generally, if it is an infection that is spread by contact (staff touching you and then touching other patients) then gloves and aprons will be worn.

If it is an infection that is airborne (spread in the air, for example through coughing and sneezing), then staff will need to wear special masks.

Patient Information

Infection Control Department

Whipps Cross Road, Leytonstone, London, E11 1NR www.whippsx.nhs.uk

If you are in isolation to protect you from other patients then staff may also need to take precautions, this will depend on what they are doing.

An isolation sign will be placed on your door to inform staff members of the precautions they need to take before entering the room. However, this does not give any information on your condition which remains confidential to staff.

Staff should either wash their hands or use the alcohol gel before and after touching you.

How long will I have to be in isolation for?

This will depend on the type of infection you have but generally you will need to remain in isolation until you are no longer infectious to other patients. If you are in protective isolation you will need to remain there until your doctors say you are no longer at a high risk of picking up an infection.

Can I leave the isolation room?

Again, this will depend on the infection that you have and how it is spread. You may be able to take precautions that will enable you to leave your room, but you will need to discuss this first with the ward staff who will advise you.

Will being in isolation stop me receiving treatment or procedures?

No. If you need to go to other departments or wards to have treatment or procedures, the staff in these areas will be made aware of your condition and will take the relevant precautions.

Will I still be able to have visitors?

In most cases you will still be able to have visitors. There may be some circumstances where visiting is not advisable, for example bringing very young children into the hospital.

It is usually safe for pregnant women to visit, however there may be some conditions which are unsafe for them, for example if you have chicken pox. It is best that you check with staff if you are unsure.

Generally, any visitors that are unwell should not visit you.

Extra caution should be taken for those in protective isolation and visitors with even minor illnesses like a cold should not visit until they have fully recovered.

Do my visitors need to wear protective clothing?

Visitors do not usually need to wear gloves and aprons because it is not expected that they would be going to other patients. However, it is advisable that visitors speak to staff first to find out if any precautions are necessary.

What should visitors do?

- Wash hands upon entering and leaving the room.
- Check with nursing staff if they have any questions.
- Avoid visiting if unwell. This is to protect both you and them.

Questions or concerns

If you have any further questions or concerns about infection prevention and control at Whipps Cross please contact our Infection Control Nurses or ask a nurse to arrange for them to come and speak to you.

Contact

Infection Control Nurses, Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm:

- Telephone: 0208 535 6846
- Email: infection.control@whippsx.nhs.uk.

Further information

NHS Direct:

- Telephone: 0845 4647
- Website: www.nhsdirect.co.uk

Health Protection Agency:

Provides the figures and rates of MRSA at all NHS hospitals.

- Website: <http://www.hpa.org.uk>

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