Patients to wear mask inside and outside hospital room

August 13, 2020

For the safety of patients, visitors and colleagues, effective immediately, all patients are now to wear a mask (non N95) both when they are outside of their hospital rooms, and when a health care worker and/or visitor is in their room. If a patient does not have his/her mask, one should be provided. A patient’s mask should be stored in his/her room and reused, unless damaged or soiled. View the Process Change Alert.

A flyer reminding patients to wear their mask is now available to print and post in each patient’s hospital room (find on MercyOne.org/desmoines/COVID).

If a patient indicates he/she is unable to wear a mask for medical or psychological reasons, a MercyOne colleague should provide him/her with tissues; ask the patient to cover any coughs or sneezes; and advise them to perform frequent hand hygiene and social distancing protocols while in the facility.

FOR VISITORS

If a visitor is unable to tolerate a mask, he/she should not be permitted to enter the medical center. Exceptions to this apply to the following compassionate care situations:

- Care giver(s) providing support to children (minor) admitted to the hospital or accompanying children for medical care (e.g., ambulatory care setting)
- Care givers providing support in the Labor and Delivery Unit
- Care givers providing support in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Visitors of patients receiving end-of-life care
- Care givers providing support to developmentally/cognitively impaired patient

SCRIPTING FOR MERCYONE COLLEAGUES WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH PATIENTS

- For your well-being, and the wellness you visitors, caregivers and other patients, we would like you to please wear a mask in your hospital room when others are with you. This includes your loved ones and all members of your care team, who we also require use a face covering.
- If you do not have your own mask, we can provide one to you. I would also be glad to show you how to properly wear a mask to best protect you and others, and how to store your mask when you’re not using it.
- Wearing a mask may help prevent people who have COVID-19 – including those who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic – from spreading the virus to others.
- COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice. The droplets can reach people nearby, potentially causing them to become infected, as well.
- Thank you for supporting my health by following this guidance.