

Isolation Precautions

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Why are patients isolated?

Patients are nursed in side rooms to prevent suspected or confirmed infections passing onto other patients and staff. Patients may also be nursed in single rooms to protect them if they have a condition or are taking treatment which makes them more susceptible to developing infections. Requiring a single room may mean that a patient needs to be transferred to another ward where an appropriate single room is available. Where a single room is not available, patients may be nursed on the main ward but with additional precautions in place.

What will happen if you are isolated?

- You will receive information about why you are to be isolated
- An isolation sign will be displayed on the single room door for staff awareness and action
- Staff will wash their hands prior to entering the single room and on leaving the single room
- Staff will wear appropriate protective clothing (aprons and gloves) depending upon the type of infection you have and the type of care you require. This may mean that staff wear a long sleeved gown or a respiratory mask
- Being under isolation will not affect your care. Other staff caring for you (e.g. physiotherapists, dietitians, occupational therapists) will visit as planned but will wear appropriate protective clothing
- We aim to ensure your single room will have an en-suite toilet, but where this is not possible, a commode will be reserved for your use

What we ask from you:

- Please remain in the single room unless otherwise advised
- Please keep the door closed at all times to prevent the spread of infection
- Please don't visit other patients on the ward or other rooms and please don't share personal items, food or equipment
- Please wash your hands before eating and after using the toilet
- Please avoid touching cannula sites or removing wound dressings
- Please keep personal items to a minimum to help staff keep your room clean
- Please ask visitors to avoid bringing in any home-cooked or take-away food. Packaged food such as biscuits and crisps are acceptable

To help prevent infection we ask that visitors:

- are limited to two at a time
- do not visit if they are unwell or have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the last 3 days
- wash their hands before entering and after leaving the single room
- do not bring young children or babies to visit, as they can be vulnerable to infection
- do not bring food and drinks to consume in the single room
- visit the patient who is under isolation in a single room last of all, if they have more than one patient to visit in the hospital
- use the visitors' chairs which are provided and do not sit on the patient's bed or chair
- use the visitors' toilet and not patients' toilets on the ward

Visitors do not normally need to wear protective clothing (gloves and aprons) unless they are providing personal care to the patient. Please speak to the staff caring for the patient for further advice.

Coping with Isolation

Please remember that isolation within a single room is intended to keep you safe and prevent infections. Some patients enjoy the privacy offered by a single room and appreciate not being disturbed by others.

However, sometimes patients under isolation in a single room might feel anxious and lonely.

If you notice these feelings developing:

- talk to the staff caring for you about why you are in isolation
- This can help to reduce feelings of anxiety. Let them know if you start to feel sad or irritable
- although we ask that personal items are kept to a minimum, you can ask your family/friends to bring in a few personal items (e.g. photographs, mobile phone, personal radio/player) to reduce loneliness
- likewise, to reduce boredom, have one or two activities available to keep you occupied. This might include books, music, games or arts and crafts activities to help pass the time
- try not to sleep in the day to reduce boredom, as this may make it difficult for you to sleep at night

How long does isolation last?

This will depend on the reason why you have been isolated and can last from only a few days up to the whole time of your stay. When isolation is no longer needed you will be moved into a bay or discharged. The single room will then be cleaned before reuse.

Infection Prevention Team

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust has worked with AccessAble to create detailed Access Guides to facilities, wards and departments at our sites.

www.accessable.co.uk/united-lincolnshire-hospitals-nhs-trust

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk