



Preparing to Visit a Loved One in the Hospital

MU Patient Education Series

Having a loved one in the hospital can be a novel, scary, worrisome experience. You may feel helpless, disconnected and confused. But you must remember that for everything you are feeling, your loved one is experiencing times ten! Being the patient is much more challenging than being the supportive loved one! Visiting your loved one in the hospital can help make their recovery go smoother. Your visit will calm them, entertain them and make them feel more at home. Though visits can be fun, it is important to remember that a hospital is a serious place of healing. Below is a list of tips on how to be a beneficial visitor.

- Ask permission before you visit
- Turn your cell phone off or on silent
- Do not overstay your welcome
- Ask your loved one if he/she wants you to stay when the doctor or nurse comes in
- Ask if there is anything you can do to make them more comfortable
- Do not look or act surprised with their condition
- Be sure to check visiting hours
- Find out what type of food your loved one can and cannot eat before bringing anything
- Do not visit if you have any symptoms of a cold or the flu
- Wash your hands before and after touching the patient
- Do not touch any medical equipment
- Keep your voice down
- Try not to come with a large group of people—this can be extremely overwhelming to the patient
- Do not bring young children unless it is necessary
- Do not have the smell of cigarette smoke on you
- Make sure your loved one knows you are coming
- Bring a small gift of some sort with you
- Help plan for your loved one's trip home

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