

October 3, 2017

Guidance for Patients at Increased Risk for Infectious Exposures

For the purposes of this communication, patients at increased risk for infectious exposures include:

- Immunocompromised patients (due to bone marrow or solid organ transplant, chemotherapy, taking immunosuppressive therapy such as TNF-alpha inhibitors or prolonged steroids, HIV, etc.)
- Chronically ill patients, particularly with chronic lung (including CF) and/or heart disease

What are We Doing to Mitigate Risk?

- Construction plans are always assessed for risks including exposures and infections, and are not approved until proper protective measures are in place.
- Construction sites are sprayed with water frequently to prevent dust and spores from getting blown into the air.
- All air in the A and B buildings is filtered with HEPA filters to remove particles from the air before it gets into the hospital.
- Air flow is designed to prevent harmful spores from entering and lingering in the hospital. Air flow is monitored electronically 24 hours a day.
- When trouble spots are identified, the Infection Control Program will investigate and help mitigate quickly.
- While actual construction of our new critical care tower has not yet begun, you may have noticed that project work is well underway.
- Much of the work to be done will involve digging, removing roads, and building demolition. These disruptions can cause spores of fungus to get into the air. Inhaling fungal spores can be harmful to some patients.
- Most of the time, the risk to patients is no worse than a routine day. However, the risk can vary depending on construction activity and weather conditions.
- The risk to caregivers and family members is not much higher than routine. Inhalation of these spores is typically unnoticed in healthy people, and poses no risk to those around them.
- We encourage you to talk to your healthcare provider about how to best protect our most vulnerable patients. We are providing this information to help guide discussions with your healthcare provider.
- Watching the construction work – Watching a construction site develop into a building can be fascinating to children and adults. However, watching in an outdoor setting increases the risk of harmful exposures.
 - o We encourage you to find windows in the hospital buildings where you can view the exciting activities without the higher risk.



- Outpatients – If your child is coming from home and visiting CCHMC for clinic visits, his risk is likely no higher than the routine. This is especially true if you are arriving from outside the CCHMC neighborhood and parking in the visitors' garage.
- Inpatients – If your child is an inpatient, her risk is lowered by measures taken to filter and control air flow inside CCHMC buildings. It is important to avoid actions that may disrupt these measures, such as propping doors open, lingering in room doorways, and blocking vents. Please check with your provider before rearranging any furniture in your room or common areas.
- Discharges – Your provider will decide when you are safe to live outside of the hospital. Discuss with your provider the risks and benefits of discharge timing to minimize risk from the environment.
- Ronald McDonald House – Discuss with your provider what you may need to do to minimize risk while staying at, and travelling to and from the Ronald McDonald House.
 - o Walking from Ronald McDonald House to CCHMC (A building) usually has no more risk than routine. At times, the risk may be increased with a change in wind patterns or more extensive ground disruption. Discuss with your provider whether taking the shuttle to CCHMC is a better option than walking. The patient shuttle picks up at CCHMC location C entrance and departs every half hour between the hours of 8:00am-8:30pm on weekdays. A Ronald McDonald shuttle runs by request (513-636-7642) from 8:30pm-10:15pm.
 - o Playing in the Ronald McDonald House yard – Families may want to avoid spending time outside during construction hours. Major work typically will run from 7am to 9pm.
 - o Watching a construction site develop into a building can be fascinating to children and adults. However, watching in an outdoor setting, such as one of the house's terraces or balconies, increases the risk of harmful exposures. We encourage you to find windows in the hospital buildings where you can view the exciting activities without the higher risk.

Please direct any questions to your provider.