

Frequently Asked Questions:

Visitor and Patient Access to Rush University Medical Center

For your health and safety and that of all of our patients and staff, we are checking Rush patients and visitors at the Rush entrances for symptoms of the flu. Also, since children are at the highest risk of flu infection, no one under the age of 16 will be allowed to visit patients until flu rates decrease. We strongly believe that these measures are in the best interests of everyone who comes to Rush.

As you enter Rush, please let Rush staff members know if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches or body aches
- Chills
- Fatigue

Thank you for helping us keep you, your loved ones and all of us safe.

Below are some brief questions and answers about this.

Why has Rush taken these steps?

These steps are based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to decrease the potential for the H1N1 influenza to spread. Many other hospitals across the country have begun screening visitors in a similar way to prevent the spread of flu-like illnesses.

When did this start?

Wednesday morning, November 4.

What happens if visitors come to Rush with flu-like symptoms?

If you're a visitor and exhibit any of the symptoms listed above, you may be asked to go home rather than potentially spread illness to your loved one or others.

If you're a patient coming to see your doctor and you have flu-like symptoms, you will be asked to wear a mask.

Once you are screened, you will receive a yellow "flu check" sticker to wear while on campus.

Why is it necessary to limit the age of visitors?

It's necessary because children are at the highest risk of flu infection, and young people have a greater severity of illness if they become infected. No one under the age of 16 will be allowed to visit patients until flu rates decrease. Please talk to your caregivers at Rush about any questions related to this policy.

I'm bringing my child, who is having flu-like symptoms, to see a doctor at Rush. Why do we have to get screened? I already know he's sick.

The screening at our entrances is simply a way to protect everyone — all of our patients, visitors and staff. Your child with flu-like symptoms may simply be asked to wear a mask while on the campus to keep from spreading the illness.

When is the screening taking place?

Screening will be happening during inpatient visiting hours, which are between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Where are visitors and patients being screened?

Rush security and clinical personnel will screen visitors for symptoms of flu at the following locations:

- Fourth floor of the Atrium Building
- Fourth floor of Armour Academic Center
- First floor of Johnston R. Bowman Center
- First floor of Jelke

There are stations with masks and hand sanitizer at the Triangle Office Building and Professional Building. Outpatient clinics also will be screening all patients and their families.

What if a family member in the hospital has special needs for a child to visit?

Please check in with your caregivers at Rush regarding any questions about the policy, and they will follow through on any special arrangements that may need to be made.

How will Rush inform patients and visitors about any changes?

We have informed all personnel at Rush who are being asked to communicate this to patients planning to come to Rush for any matter. We have also posted the information on the Rush Web site (www.rush.edu), put up posters around Rush and have sent an announcement to the news media. We will keep the Rush community informed of any further changes in flu-level designation and building access via the Rush Web site and signage around the Medical Center.

What is the most effective way to prevent the spread of flu?

Limiting the spread of the flu virus and protecting yourself and your family include some everyday actions to stay healthy.

- Get vaccinated when seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccine is available.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. No tissue available? Cough into your sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- If you get sick, stay home.
- Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

For more information, please check www.rush.edu for regular updates.