



## INFORMATION ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) AND THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

Dear NICU Families,

In our Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Special Care Unit (SCN), we embrace family-centered care and strive to integrate families into the care team. However, with ongoing concerns for COVID-19, we continue to adjust our policies to protect babies, families, and staff.

- At this time, we cannot allow any non-parent family members or other visitors into the NICU. Parents can come to the NICU individually or together.
- If you are sick, you will not be able to enter the NICU. If you are not feeling well or have symptoms of illness, please defer coming to the NICU until you are symptom free.
- Each day you come to the NICU, you will be asked a brief set of questions to assess for COVID-19 exposures, including recent symptoms and contact with others with COVID-19. Those with any of these risks will be asked to postpone NICU entry per hospital guidelines.
- When a parent or parents come to the NICU, we ask that you remain within the hospital until ready to leave for the day. The cafeteria is open for NICU families with prepared To Go meals.
- Parents will also be asked to **wear a BIDMC-issued surgical mask** during their time in the NICU. Masks can be obtained each day in the main entry lobbies by informing the ambassadors that you are a NICU parent. You must wear a mask even if you have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Throughout the hospital, please only wear masks provided by BIDMC.
- We ask that parents practice **physical distancing** both in and outside of the NICU. This means keeping at least 6 feet between you and other people, including those without any symptoms.
- Our staff is also practicing **physical distancing**. A member of your baby's clinical team will provide you with updates and you may attend rounds with the multidisciplinary team. Please request to speak with your baby's provider at any time with questions or concerns regarding your baby's care.
- To maintain physical distancing, we have temporarily closed common rooms for families. Water is available in the parent hallway, and your nurse can get you other refreshments if needed. We have placed snack bags for families in all units.
- As always, hand cleaning is of the utmost importance. Please thoroughly wash your hands with soap or use alcohol-based sanitizers (such as Purell or CalStat) frequently. This includes when you are entering and leaving the NICU, entering into your baby's room, and before and after every contact with your baby. We ask that you practice these precautions outside of the NICU as well.

We understand that this is a very stressful time for families and we will facilitate virtual communication to the best of our ability. We hope you understand that these changes have been implemented to keep babies in the NICU safe, and we appreciate your cooperation with these and future changes. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact a member of your baby's health care team.

Sincerely,

*Kathleen Tolland*

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