

Temporary visitor restrictions

Information for our patients and those close to them

At BIDMC, we are doing everything we can to keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand how difficult it can be to be separated from a loved one during illness or a hospitalization, but limiting visitors is one of the ways we can ensure the safety of patients and staff.

We are currently not allowing hospitalized patients to have visitors. In addition, **patients coming for appointments, surgery, or tests should come alone.** Exceptions may be made for (1) a patient who must have a designated support person with them due to disability or special needs, (2) patients in obstetrics and the NICU (the care team will tell you more), and (3) a very limited number of other circumstances.

For hospitalized patients

- We encourage you to plan regular calls, video chats, or text conversations with loved ones. You may use your personal cellphone, tablet, or laptop to connect to the BIDMC Guest Wifi. **Please remember to plug in your device.** If you do not have a device, speak to your care team. All units have tablets that patients can borrow to make calls.
- You may also receive calls on your bedside phone. Your care team can provide you with the phone number. You may use this phone to make outgoing calls to any Massachusetts area code.
- In the case of rare exceptions to the visitor policy, for example for end-of-life visits, please note that some limits will still apply. Please ask your care team for more information.
- When it is time for you to go home, someone will bring you to the lobby to meet the person picking you up. Speak to your care team about how to coordinate with your driver. If your care team needs to meet with your caregiver to provide teaching about your care, we will make special arrangements for that person to come to the unit before you leave.

For patients coming in for surgery, appointments, or tests

- You should come alone or be dropped off in the lobby.
- If you require special assistance due to a disability or special needs, one designated support person is allowed. That person must be screened for risk of COVID-19 and must wear a hospital-approved mask.
- For patients going home after their visit, we are sorry that we cannot allow family members/drivers to wait for you inside the hospital. This is to maintain social distancing. Please be sure you and your care team have a phone number for the person who will be picking you up. They will be called when you are ready to leave.