

Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

Visiting Guidelines for Family Members

What is the PACU?

The Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) is a critical care unit that provides care for patients immediately after receiving anesthesia for surgery. Here, anesthesiologists and specially trained nurses closely monitor vital signs, give intravenous (IV) fluids and manage pain, nausea and other issues that may arise after anesthesia and surgery.

PACU is a busy open unit with patients coming and going 24 hours a day. Visiting guidelines are in place to protect the privacy of all our patients and to provide a calm and quiet environment, important for post anesthesia care

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General Guidelines for Visitors:

- Do not visit if you are unwell or have flu-like symptoms.
- Please **no more than 2** adult family members at a time.
- When PACU stay is expected to be less than 2 hours or discharge from PACU is expected within 30 minutes, you may be asked to postpone your visit until the patient is in their room.
- Visiting is limited to **no more than 5 minutes** as patients need time for rest and nursing care immediately after surgery.
- If your family member has special needs or requires a caregiver at the bedside, we may ask you to stay longer.
- If your family member requires a long PACU stay, your visiting time may be increased.
- At any time of day, if PACU is busy with patient care needs, you may be asked to postpone your visit until unit activity has decreased.
- If your family member or a patient nearby requires special nursing attention or medical intervention, we may ask visitors to leave, or to delay their visit.
- During your visit, please:
 - Respect other patients in the PACU by staying at the bedside of your family member.
 - Do not bring food or drinks into PACU.
 - Turn phones to silent.
 - Remember to wash your hands when entering and leaving PACU.

Can I Call PACU to Check on My Family Member?

- Please limit phone calls to PACU. Telephone calls from several family members take nurses away from the time we need to care for our patients. Please choose **one** spokesperson from your family to inquire about your family member.

How Long Will My Family Member be in PACU?

- Length of stay will depend on the length and type of surgery as well as the type and amount of anesthesia given.

What Can I expect if I Visit?

- Your family member will most likely be very drowsy due to the anesthesia and pain medications.
- Patients may have IV infusions, surgical drains, oxygen and monitoring equipment attached to them.
- There may be lots of activity around from other patients, nurses, doctors and monitoring equipment.

The PACU staff look forward to working with your family member as they begin their road to recovery. We hope we can provide a positive experience in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit