
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 8, 2020

The following news advisory is being distributed by the Kent County Health Department on behalf of Spectrum Health, Metro Health – University of Michigan Health and Mercy Health.

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Grand Rapids Hospitals Enacting Visitor Restrictions

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., January 8, 2020 – Working to meet the challenge of caring for the community amid an influx of respiratory illness, Grand Rapids hospitals are asking those who are ill to refrain from visiting hospitalized friends or family members. One of the most important tools in fighting the transmission of infection is limiting exposure.

Michigan is among the hardest hit states for respiratory illnesses this season, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Respiratory illnesses, including RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), can be especially dangerous to the young, frail or elderly.

Visitors are asked to respect the following restrictions:

- If you are ill, please refrain from visiting the hospital
- All visitors are expected to be healthy and the hospitals are taking active steps to protect patients, staff and visitors. A healthy visitor is someone who does not have the following symptoms:
 - Fever, greater than 100.4 F

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or congestion
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Rash or draining sores
- Only healthy visitors may visit patients in the hospitals or outpatient locations
- Anyone with the above symptoms should consider a video visit with a provider, an appointment with their primary care physician or an urgent care visit

These restrictions apply to visitors at Mercy Health Saint Mary's, Metro Health – University of Michigan and all Spectrum Health hospitals and are effective until further notice. The measures are designed to protect vulnerable patients, as well as staff members. The hospitals will continue to monitor the situation and stay in contact with clinical leaders at health systems across the state to collaboratively and effectively address the situation.

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