

NIH Clinical Center Patient Education Materials

Welcome to 3 Southwest South (3SW-N) Procedures, Vascular Access, Conscious Sedation (PVCS) Unit

Contact Information

Main phone: 301-451-0336

After-hours page operator: 301-496-1211

Fax: 301-480-3616

Hours

Monday - Friday: 6a.m. - 6:30p.m.

Closed weekends and Holidays

The Clinical Research Nurses on 3SW-N PVCS Unit work together to give you the best care during your time at the Clinical Center. Here is some information about what you and your family can expect.

What happens when you arrive?

When you arrive at the unit, sign in at the front desk.

Please tell us right away if you have:

- Signs of infections (fever, runny nose, diarrhea)
- A history of being on isolation
- Respiratory (breathing) symptoms; if so, please ask for a mask and put it on right away
- MRSA, VRE, CRE, KPC or any other similar infection (or a history of these infections)

What are isolation precautions?

If you have a disease that could spread to others, then we may ask you to wear a mask while in the hospital. You may also need to follow rules about leaving the room. Your nurse or doctor will explain what to do. By following these rules, your family can help stop the spread of diseases.

Do you need identification?

We will give you an ID bracelet to wear on your wrist. Please understand that you need to keep it on at all times. The ID bracelet will serve as

identification for lab collection and medication administration at NIH.

What should you bring with you?

Please bring an up-to-date list of your medicines and dosages with you, including over-the-counter and herbal medications and vitamin supplements. Let your nurse know if you have any drug allergies.

If your NIH doctor prescribes medicines to take home that are related to your research study, they will be filled at the Outpatient Pharmacy on the first floor. The hours are:

- Monday –Thursday: 8:30a.m. - 6p.m.
- Friday: 8:30a.m. - 8p.m.
- Weekends and Holidays: 8:30a.m. - 12:30p.m.

What can you expect during your visit?

Before starting, your health care team will explain the procedure to you and have you sign a consent (permission) form. You may also get a pamphlet or handout with information.

On our unit, we perform the following procedures:

- Conscious sedation (getting medicine to help you relax and not feel pain during a procedure)
- Upper endoscopy, colonoscopy, and flexible sigmoidoscopy (a thin tube with a camera is used to see the inside of your esophagus, stomach, or colon)
- Bronchoscopy (a thin tube with a camera is used to look inside your lungs)
- Cardiac catheterization and intervention (a thin tube is guided to your heart through your veins or arteries to do tests or treatments)
- Biopsies (taking a tiny sample of your bone marrow, liver, skin, or muscle to test it)
- Lumbar puncture (or spinal tap, a way of getting a sample of the fluid in your spine to test)

- Central vascular access and ultrasound-guided peripheral vascular access (a thin tube is put into a vein using an ultrasound to see the vein)

For some tests, we will need a blood sample. A nurse might get a sample in your room, or you might go to the Phlebotomy Department. The Phlebotomy Department is open Monday through Friday, from 6:30a.m. to 4:15p.m.

What are the rules about visitors?

A visitor may accompany a patient to the designated unit, into the room of the patient whom they are visiting, and into common rooms (lounges, cafeterias, playrooms). Please keep in mind:

- Visitors who have been recently exposed to an infectious disease (for example, impetigo, chickenpox, tuberculosis, hepatitis) may not visit.
- Visitors with cold or flu symptoms are discouraged from visiting.
- Visitors must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer when coming in and leaving your room to prevent spreading germs.
- The bathroom in your room is only for you and other patients. Visitors should use the Clinical Center's public bathrooms.
- NIH is a smoke-free campus. If you have any questions about our smoking policy, please talk to your health care team. The NIH police may fine anyone who smokes on the NIH property.

What if you have health problems at home?

If you have a medical emergency at home, call 911 right away.

You will be given written instructions on what to do and who to contact if you have symptoms, side effects, or concerns related to your procedure.

Patient Portal

The patient portal provides patients with secure access to view selected medical information and the Patient Handbook online at any time.

To create your account, visit the website:

<http://patientportal.cc.nih.gov>

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

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National Institutes of Health Clinical Center

Bethesda, MD 20892

06/2015

[Questions about the Clinical Center?](#)

