



C R E D I T • V A L L E Y
THE CREDIT VALLEY HOSPITAL

Two Patient Units Closed to Visitors and Scheduled Surgery Postponed

Wednesday February 13, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Mississauga, Ontario): The Credit Valley Hospital has closed two of its patient units to visitors and had to restrict patient flow through those areas to prevent further spread of infection. At the same time, the hospital is experiencing an extremely high number of patients requiring admission to hospital through the emergency department. These combined factors have necessitated the cancellation of scheduled surgeries including the postponement of some cancer surgeries.

The hospital is taking necessary precautions to protect patients and staff from gastrointestinal illness (stomach flu). Although visitors are still allowed in hospital at this time, **the hospital is not allowing visitors on the two patient units experiencing the outbreak.**

The hospital also cannot discharge patients who would ordinarily return to nursing homes, because of the risk of taking the infection with them.

Because the inability to guarantee scheduled surgical patients a bed for recovery, the hospital has already cancelled some scheduled surgeries and is putting other surgical patients on notice that their surgery may be postponed.

Gastrointestinal illnesses, often called stomach flu, are passed in the stool and vomit of infected persons. Proper hand hygiene is imperative to prevent the spread of the illness.

Staff and physicians managing these patients must wear gloves and gowns to prevent the spread of infection outside the patient's room. The affected patients have been separated from the general patient population to prevent the spread of infection.

The hospital is asking the community to prevent the spread of germs at home and within the community by washing their hands frequently to prevent the spread of germs. Visitors are asked not to visit patients in hospital if they are feeling unwell.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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WHAT IS VIRAL GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS (also called the “ Stomach Flu“)?

Viral gastrointestinal illnesses are passed in the stool and vomit of infected persons.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Anyone can get the virus by direct contact with an infected person or by coming in contact with objects contaminated by an infected person. This type of gastrointestinal illness is usually spread by touching infected material and transferring the virus to your mouth.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and sometimes fever.

HOW SERIOUS IS IT?

At this time of year, it is normal for healthcare facilities to experience a few isolated staff and patient cases of viral gastroenteritis. While the virus does not cause severe illness, people whose health is already compromised are likely to be more affected. That is why it is very important to prevent the spread of the virus in hospitals.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

This type of illness usually lasts for about two days. Treatment includes plenty of fluids, rest and isolation of patients with symptoms. It is important to know that patients are contagious for 48 hours after their symptoms stop.

HOW CAN I HELP?

The best way to protect yourself from getting sick is by practicing good hand washing and hygiene. If you develop symptoms, please do not visit the hospital until you are better. If you have any concerns about how you are feeling, you should consult your family physician.

People who are ill should try to avoid preparing or handling food for others. Whenever possible, they should also use a separate bathroom.

More information on the various forms of gastrointestinal illness is available by contacting the Region of Peel’s Public Health Department at (905) 799-7700. If community members have any concerns, they should contact their family physician or the local health department.

WHAT IS THE HOSPITAL DOING TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS?

We have taken the necessary steps to help avoid spread of the virus, including isolating patients who are experiencing symptoms and treating their symptoms. Our Infection Prevention and Control team is monitoring all areas of the hospital. We have communicated information to families and visitors throughout the hospital asking them not to visit if they are ill.

IF A UNIT IS CLOSED DUE TO AN OUTBREAK, WHEN WILL IT BE RE-OPENED?

The virus is contagious for 48 hours after the symptoms stop. A unit is re-opened when there have been no new cases for a minimum of three consecutive days. We will continue to provide updates on any situation at the hospital.

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