



St. Luke Implements New Visitation Guidelines

To protect patients from the H1N1 flu virus, St. Luke's Boise/Meridian Medical Centers, St. Luke's Magic Valley Medical Center and St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center have implemented new guidelines for visitors.

St. Luke's Boise & St. Luke's Meridian

- **No sick visitors.** If you are ill please stay home.
- **No visitors under 14.** Only family members or friends who are 14 or older should visit a patient in the hospital or accompany a patient to the emergency department.
- **Only two visitors at a time.** This applies to visitors to inpatient rooms and to those accompanying someone to the emergency department.

Additional restrictions are in place for the following specialized units:

- **Newborn intensive care (NICU), Pediatric intensive care (PICU) and pediatric units** – Visitation will be limited to only parents and grandparents of patients.
- **Antepartum, Labor and Deliver and Mother Baby Units** – Visitation will be limited to spouses/ labor support person/ legal guardians, grandparents and siblings of the new baby only - **no other young children.**

St. Luke's Magic Valley & St. Luke's Wood River

- **Mother Baby Units** – Visitation will be limited to spouses/ labor support person/ legal guardians, grandparents and siblings of the new baby only - **no other young children.**
- **Other Patient Care Units** – Visitation will be limited to only visitors who are over 18 and immediate family members such as parents (including parents under 18), grandparents, or significant others of un-married patients.

St. Luke's normally enacts stricter visitation policies for the seasonal flu season, which typically lasts from December through April. But this year, given the growing number of H1N1 flu cases, and uncertainty about when the H1N1 vaccine will be available, the decision was made to enact policies earlier.

The new policy is a precaution to better protect St. Luke's patients. According to the Centers for Disease Control, children are one of the populations at most risk to contract the H1N1 virus. The virus can also be contagious up to two days prior to the onset of symptoms, making it even more critical to limit access to these hospital units. **The new policy will remain in effect until further notice.**