



## Welcome to 12 East

*Welcome to patient care unit 12 East, a 20-bed patient care unit in the Clinical Center at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Patients on 12 East take part in clinical research studies of the National Cancer Institute.*

*Knowing that this is a stressful time for you and for those who care about you, the nursing staff has compiled this information about your hospital stay. It will answer many questions you may have about being a patient here, but it may not answer them all. Please do not hesitate to ask questions at any time.*

### Part 1: General Unit Information

#### Nursing care

Primary nursing is practiced on 12 East. This means that a primary nurse will work with you and your doctors to plan and provide your care. A collaborating team of nurses will also be assigned to you. The goal of primary nursing is to provide quality nursing care. Whenever you have comments about your care, feel free to speak to your primary nurse or the charge nurse.

#### Visiting hours

Visiting hours are daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Each patient may have two visitors in the room at once. Please be considerate of your roommate by observing the visiting hours and by limiting the number of people

in your room. If you prefer, you may see your visitors in the patient solarium. But before you go there, please inform your nurse.

#### Visitors: children

Visitors may be any age, but when children visit, your nurse will ask you to fill out a form called a “Health Screening Tool.” This form helps ensure that your young visitors have had all their vaccinations and that they do not have the flu or other germs that could be passed to other patients. Your nurse will be happy to give you this form when you need it.

#### Leaving the unit

There may be times when you will be allowed to leave the unit to join patient activities or just to take a walk outside. Before you leave, please check with your nurse to make sure that you do not miss medications or tests. When you go, sign out at the nurses’ station and tell your nurse that you are leaving.

If you plan to leave the Clinical Center for a few hours or overnight, your doctor must write a “pass order.” When you have a pass order, please tell your nurse when you are leaving, when you plan to return, and where you can be reached.

There may be times when your nurse or doctor asks you not to leave the unit. This is to protect you and your health and will be due to your condition or treatment.

## Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in any building on the NIH campus, including the Clinical Center. Smoking is banned on all Clinical Center patient care units and throughout the building, including stairwells and parking garages. Smoking is also prohibited within 100 feet of all entrances and hospital smoke-free zones. We expect that you will not smoke while you are here at NIH. If this is a concern for you, please speak with your nurse or doctor.

## Flowers/Plants

Flowers and plants are not permitted in our Experimental Transplant Unit (rooms 205-213). This is to protect our patients with weakened immune systems. As an alternative, we recommend non-latex balloons, pictures, or artificial flowers.

## Part 2: Unit Routines

### Vital signs

When you are admitted, your nurse will check your temperature, pulse, respiratory rate, and blood pressure. He or she will also place a light monitor on your finger to check the amount of oxygen in your blood. These “vital signs” will be taken periodically to track your progress. The usual times for checking vital signs are 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 p.m., 8 p.m., and 12 midnight. Vital signs may be taken more often or on a different schedule depending on your treatment or condition.

Your height and weight will also be measured when you are admitted. You will be weighed each morning at about 6 a.m. if your protocol requires this information.

### Medications

While you are a patient on 12 East, do not take medications, herbs, or vitamins that you brought from home. They may interfere with your treatment. This includes over-the-counter medications or prescriptions you received in the past. Tell your nurse about any medication, herb, or vitamin that you take at home.

If you brought medications with you, give them to your nurse or ask a family member to take them home. Medications given to your nurse will be returned to you before you leave the hospital, along with new medications your NIH doctor has prescribed. Please do not leave the hospital until you get your medications.

### Tests

As part of your protocol, you will need x-rays and other tests. Your doctor or nurse will tell you the reason for each test and what happens before, during, and after it. Some tests require a consent form, which your doctor will ask you to sign before the test is done. Please ask questions if you do not understand what has been explained. Your nurse may also give you written information about these tests. Your blood will be drawn every morning. You can get a copy of your blood work results by asking your nurse.

## Intake and output

It may be important during your treatment to monitor how much you eat and drink (intake) and how much you use the bathroom (output). Your nurse may ask you when to start and stop keeping intake and output measurements.

## Rounds

Doctors, nurses, and other health professionals visit patients and discuss their health status and health care plans every morning. During rounds, the doctors may wish to examine you and talk to you about your progress. This is a good time to ask questions or share concerns. You may find it helpful to write your questions down before the doctors visit you.

## Telephones

You and your roommate will each have a bedside telephone, with a common number to both. You will find the number listed on the bulletin board at the foot of your bed. Local calls can be made from this phone by pressing “9,” area code, and the number. To make a collect call or bill telephone charges to your credit card, press “0.” You may not charge calls to your bedside telephone number. Please do not use the black telephones located in the hallway: they are for staff only.

## *Long-distance calls*

12 East has a telephone for making free long-distance calls within the United States, 24-hours a day. This telephone is located next to the nurses’ station, in room 223. To place a call, press 9-1-area code and number. Only patients and their family members may use these telephones, and calls should be limited to 10 minutes. Please be considerate of others when using this phone.

## Meals and snacks

The Nutrition Department makes your meals and serves them at your bedside while you are in the hospital. Some of our patients are on “room service” and may order meals any time during the day, between 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. For medical reasons, some of our patients are on traditional meal schedules with specified diets. Your nurse will let you know which plan you are on.

### *Meal times (for patients on a set meal plan)*

Breakfast	8 to 8:30 a.m.
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Lunch	noon to 1 p.m.
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Dinner	5 to 5:30 p.m.
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*Please note: After the kitchen closes at 6:15 p.m., there can be no menu changes or food deliveries.*

## Patient refreshments

A patient refreshment area is located in the hallway on 12 East (across from room 1S 229). It includes a refrigerator containing drinks provided by the Nutrition Department. This refreshment area includes a microwave, ice machine, instant coffee, tea bags, hot chocolate, and condiments. There are also packages of cereal, crackers, and instant soups. Water is located in a cooler in the telephone room, next to the nurses’ station. Your nurse will give you a water pitcher and cups.

A second refrigerator is located in the solarium. This is available to store food or drinks brought from home. All food must be labeled with your name and the date.

## Mail

Mail is delivered to 12 East Monday through Friday during daytime hours. Family and friends should be sure to write your name and “12 East Patient Mail” on the envelope.

If you want to mail letters yourself, there is a self-service post office on the B1 level of the Clinical Center.

Mail received after you go home will be forwarded to your home address.

### *Your address at the Clinical Center*

Your Name  
12 East Patient Mail  
National Institutes of Health  
Clinical Center, Building 10  
10 Center Drive, MSC 1912  
Bethesda, MD 20892-1912  
*Please note: Mail sent to you at NIH  
from your home will be slower than  
you expect.*

## Computer access

The 12 East solarium has a computer for patients and their families. The computer offers access to the Internet, games, and up-to-date information on cancer research, protocols, and treatments. Instructions for computer use are posted next to the computer. If you need more information about the computer, just ask at the nurses’ station.

## Valuables

Please do not keep large amounts of money, jewelry, or other important items in your room. Give valuables to your family, or have them locked in the cashier’s office on the first floor of the Clinical Center. If you go to surgery, the nursing staff can lock up jewelry, watches, or small amounts of money until you return. You may also give these items to your family before surgery. Unfortunately, we cannot secure electronic devices such as computers, or CD or tape players.

## Discharge from the Clinical Center

Before you leave 12 East to go home, your doctor will authorize any travel orders, schedule return appointments, and order medications to be taken at home. Your nurse will tell you about the purpose and side effects of these medications. Your nurse will also talk with you about any symptoms you should report to your doctor. He or she will give you written instructions about your medications or care at home.

There are a few other things you should check to make sure your discharge goes smoothly:

- Make sure any medications you gave to your nurse upon admission are returned to you.
- Retrieve valuables or clothing locked up during your stay.
- On the day you leave for home, please do not leave the unit until you have spoken with your nurse.

## Part 3: Other Clinical Center Services

### Recreation therapy

Recreation therapy helps patients improve their functioning and independence and reduces the side effects of illness and treatment. For example, recreation therapy can help you cope with your illness through relaxation and guided imagery. A trained recreation therapist is assigned to 12 East.

Recreation therapists can also help you with the following: limited mobility, fatigue or lowered endurance, pain, feelings of isolation, changes in mood, fear, anger, anxiety, loss of interest in activity, boredom, confusion, and limited ability to concentrate. Do not hesitate to ask your doctor or nurse to request a visit from the recreation therapist.

The recreation therapy section on the 14th floor also offers these services:

- relaxation classes
- arts and crafts
- Tai Chi
- games—table and board
- library
- playroom for patients and visitors 12 years old and younger
- community outings
- bingo
- other classes such as yoga; Look Good, Feel Better; and Healthy Cooking

All these activities are available to you, but you need your doctor's or nurse's permission to leave the unit and take part in them. Please refer to the Recreation Therapy Calendar of Events (posted in your room) for a schedule of activities.

### Information about patient activities

The bulletin board across from the medication room has information about shuttle schedules and hotel accommodations in the area. A second bulletin board located between rooms 225 and 227 has information about spiritual ministries, recreation therapy activities, hospital events, and special programs such as "Look Good, Feel Better."

Please feel free to read the posted announcements.

### TV

In addition to the major network channels, your bedside television set gets the hospital video theater on Channel 32. The program listing is posted on the bulletin board in your room. 12 East has a large-screen television in the solarium. VCRs and movies are also available through Recreation Therapy.

### Social work services

The first time you are seen in the clinic, a social worker will be assigned to you. This staff member can help you find local housing for your family or help arrange for special equipment and supplies you may need after discharge. The social worker knows public and private agencies that may be able to help

you with personal, financial, and health care needs. Let your nurse know if you wish to talk with your social worker.

### Spiritual ministry

The Clinical Center has two chapels that can be used by patients and families. The chapel on the 8th floor (room 8C436) is always open. The chapel on the 14th floor holds regular services on the following schedule:

- Catholic—daily at 11:15 a.m.
- Protestant—Sunday at 10 a.m.
- Islamic—Monday through Friday at 1:30 p.m.
- Devotional—Thursday at 12:30 p.m.
- Jewish—as arranged

Clinical Center clergy routinely visit patients and their families. Feel free to request their services through your nurse.

### Pain and palliative care team

The NIH pain and palliative care team consists of doctors and nurses who are experts in pain and symptom management. They may visit you and ask questions regarding your pain and other issues such as nausea, constipation, emotions, and activities. They may make recommendations to you and your doctor regarding medications and activities such as massage, music therapy, art therapy, acupuncture, rehabilitation, and recreation therapy.

### Cafeterias

The Clinical Center has two cafeterias, one on the B1 level and another on the 2nd floor. The hours are different for each, so please check at the nurses' station for cafeteria hours.

Vending machines are located outside the 2nd-floor cafeteria. On the B1 level, there is a snack bar open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can also buy books, toiletries, and other items there.

### Other facilities

#### *B1 level*

- Gift shop: open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Barber and beauty shop
- Laundry (Laundry soap and tokens to operate the washer and dryer are available at the nurses' station.)

#### *First floor of the Clinical Center*

- Coffee shop

As a patient, you are welcome to use any of these facilities, but it is important to tell your nurse before you leave the unit. You will also need to sign out on the clipboard at the nurses' station.

The 12 East nursing staff will try to make your hospital stay as comfortable as possible. If you have questions or suggestions during your stay with us, please do not hesitate to voice them.



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This information is prepared specifically for patients participating in clinical research at the Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center at the National Institutes of Health and is not necessarily applicable to individuals who are patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your healthcare team.

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