

Admissions Guide

A GUIDE TO YOUR STAY AT ROSWELL PARK CANCER INSTITUTE





Welcome to Roswell Park Cancer Institute

We have created this book as a resource to help guide you and your family during your stay at Roswell Park.

Cancer patients have unique experiences, different from those of most other patients. You may have complicated homecare instructions or treatment regimens so we want to make sure you are fully prepared to care for yourself at home. More importantly, you should always know when and where to call if you have questions or need assistance.

We will be here at every step of your journey. When you have questions, please do not hesitate to talk to your healthcare team. Your family is also welcome to stay with you during your stay to offer you the comfort and support you may need.

On behalf of all of us here, we would like to extend a warm welcome and best wishes to you and your family.

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What to Bring on the Day of Your Surgery

What to Pack

- **Your Health Insurance ID Card**

- **Your Roswell Park “Green Card”**

In a previous visit to Roswell Park, you received a “Green Card” that identifies you as a patient. Please remember to bring that card with you on the day of your surgery.

- **A List of Your Allergies**

It is important for your health care team to know if you have any allergies, especially allergies to **latex, iodine, or seafood**.

- **A List of Your Current Medications**

- **A Copy of Your Health Care Proxy Form, Advance Directive, or Living Will**

A Health Care Proxy form allows you to appoint a relative or friend to make health care decisions for you if you lose the ability to make those decisions yourself.

An Advance Directive or Living Will allows you to specify your health care preferences. If you do not have these documents, speak with Patient Access staff.

- **Personal Items**

Bring only those items that you will need during your hospital stay. This may include a nightgown or pajamas, robe, slippers, toiletry items (toothbrush, toothpaste, shaver, soap, etc.), and reading materials.

What NOT to Pack

- **Jewelry (including earrings, rings, piercings, watches, etc.)** Leave all your valuables at home. We do not have the facilities to store these for you while you are here.

- **Be prepared to remove wedding rings and nail polish.** It is important that you remove all rings before your surgery. Some hand or finger swelling is normal after surgery and a tight ring may have to be removed.

- **Money.** You won't need any money while you are in the hospital except for a credit card number to activate your TV service. Telephone services will be billed to you at home and newspapers are offered to patients at no charge.

We are not responsible for personal items lost or stolen while you are at Roswell Park, so please make sure you either leave all valuable materials at home or keep them with your friends and family. Be especially careful about leaving valuable items on your meal trays or bed linens.

Personal Healthcare Items Removed During Surgery

Items such as dentures, partial plates, contact lenses, wigs, and removable prostheses (such as an artificial eye or leg, etc.) will be removed during surgery and you will not be able to wear your glasses into the surgical suite. Please make arrangements with a family member or friend to hold these items and have them available for you when you are in recovery.

No Smoking Please

Roswell Park Cancer Institute recognizes tobacco use as the most important preventable cause of cancer. In accordance with our mission to provide total care to our patients, *smoking is prohibited on the entire Institute campus.*

Tobacco Cessation

Just Breathe, our tobacco cessation service, will systematically screen every Roswell Park patient to identify those who use tobacco so they can get the help they need to break their tobacco addiction. Some patients struggle with nicotine withdrawal while undergoing treatment as inpatients—and after they are discharged from the hospital. Just Breathe will connect tobacco users with behavioral counseling, medications, offer follow-up support, and referrals to additional services.

The Day of Your Surgery

Final Checklist Before Leaving Home

- Bathe or shower the night before or morning of your procedure.
- Do not use any deodorant, powder, or lotions after bathing or showering.
- Do not shave anywhere near your operation site.
- Remove all make up, nail polish, rings, piercings, and other jewelry.
- Remove any contact lenses.
- **Do not** bring any valuables or jewelry to the hospital.
- Wear comfortable clothing.
- Do not eat or drink anything.
- Take your medication(s) as instructed by your doctor with a small sip of water.
- Children are not permitted in the surgical preparation or recovery areas.

At the Hospital

1. Arrive on Time

You will be told what time you are to arrive at the hospital. Please arrive at your scheduled time which is usually 1 to 2 hours before your surgery. This allows time to park the car (if necessary), enter the hospital, register, and prepare for surgery.

2. Parking

At the main entrance to the hospital, your driver may ask a valet to park their car so they can accompany you into the hospital. There is a small added fee for valet parking. Wheelchairs are available at the main entrance.

Patients, or the family members or friends who accompany them, may obtain a parking discount. To receive this discount, have your parking ticket validated at the Information Desk in the lobby on the ground floor.

3. Register at Patient Access

Check in at the Patient Access Department (Registration) in the lobby, unless you have been instructed otherwise. If you will need an interpreter, tell the Patient Access staff. Interpreter services are available to help you and your family.

4. You will be directed to where your surgery will take place.

If you would like an escort, please ask the Patient Access staff and they will get one of our volunteers to assist you.

5. Check-In

A nurse will come into the waiting room to meet you and bring you to a room where you will prepare for surgery.

6. Prepare for Surgery

Your nurse will ask about your medications and allergies, particularly to latex, seafood, or iodine (the skin cleanser used prior to the surgery may contain iodine).

The nurse will take your vital signs and review your medical history. An IV (an *intravenous* tube placed in a vein in your arm) will be started. You will then be taken into the surgery room.

7. While You Are in Surgery

A staff person will direct your family and friends to the surgical waiting room. Your family or friends will receive a pager so they can keep informed of your progress and status throughout the day.

8. After Surgery

When your surgery is completed, your surgeon will come to the surgical waiting room to speak with your family and friends. You will be taken to the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) or you may be taken to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). When you are ready, staff will return you to your room. Once you are stable, your family and friends may come visit you.

9. In Your Room

Now your recovery begins. Many Roswell Park staff members will be attending to your needs, and you may ask for additional help at any time. Your family is also welcome to stay with you if you need them for extra comfort or support.

Pain Relief

Don't hesitate to let your nurses know if you are in pain or if you have an uncomfortable reaction to your pain medication. Relieving or decreasing your pain is an important part of your recovery and our staff will work with you to make sure you are as comfortable as possible.

Room Service Dining

We are pleased to be able to offer hotel-style room service for your meals during your stay at Roswell. You will be able to eat what you want, when you want it.

Upon admission, you will receive a copy of our Patient Room Service Menu. When you are ready to place your order, dial "DINE" (3463) on your room phone or 845-3463 using an outside line. We will assist you with your menu selections and ensure that any therapeutic diet needs, ordered by your physician, will be met. Meals are made-to-order and will be delivered within 30 minutes. You and your family members also have the added flexibility of ordering meals in advance or requesting a specific delivery time.

Visiting friends and family may purchase a guest meal voucher in the Sunflower Café, located on the 1st floor of the main hospital. These vouchers have no expiration date and you may purchase as many as you need. The guest meal order may be placed by calling the same number used for ordering patient meals. The guest meal will be delivered to the patient's room and the host or hostess will collect the meal voucher at that time.

Visitor Information

Checking Patient Status

During normal business hours, family and friends may get updates on your status by calling your room or the nurses' station on your floor. They may also call the hospital Information Desk at **(716) 845-1523** and ask to be transferred to your room or to your nurses' station.

After business hours, your family may call your nurses' station directly or the switchboard operator at **(716) 845-2300**.

Visitor Policy

We strongly encourage you to visit with your family member or friend. We have an open visitor policy and family members and friends are welcome to visit anytime.

- Family members are welcome to stay overnight, but will be limited to ONE person in the room. Overnight stays in semi-private patient rooms are at the discretion of the nurse manager.
- On the pediatric unit a parent or designated guardian may stay with the patient at all times.
- We ask that patients have only 2 visitors at any time. Exceptions to this rule may be approved by the nurse manager.
- The units on the 5th floor, the Pediatric Unit (6N), the Intermediate Care Unit and the Intensive Care Unit may have additional criteria for visitors. Please check with your nurse for more information.

Visitor Courtesy

For the benefit of our patients, Roswell Park asks visitors to maintain these courtesies:

- Please do not visit if you are sick or have recently been sick with a cold or flu.
- Please wash or use hand sanitizer before and after entering a patient's room.
- Make your visits brief. Patients need rest to recover.
- Remember, the patient may be in pain. Don't sit on the patient's bed.
- You may be asked to leave the room for nursing or physician examinations.
- If the patient's door is closed, or if a sign is posted, please check at the nurses' station before entering.

Infection Prevention

We want to protect our patients from infectious diseases that are easily transmitted from person to person (such as viral infections).

- Wash or sanitize your hands before and after entering a patient's room.
- All visitors with communicable infectious diseases should refrain from visiting patients. We ask that visitors do **NOT** come to Roswell Park Cancer Institute if they have an influenza-like illness, which means **a fever greater than or equal to 100°F (37.8°C) with cough and/or sore throat in the last 7 days.**

Visitor Services

While waiting for a patient in surgery or during visiting hours, visitors may take advantage of these services available within Roswell Park Cancer Institute:

- **The Sunflower Café** is located on 1st floor. Weekend and holiday hours are **8:00am to 5:30pm**. The Cafe is closed from **10:30am to 11:00am** every day.
- **A Pastoral Care Center and Meditation Chapel** is located on the 1st floor of the main hospital (on the bridge to the Carlton Building).
- **Dunkin' Donuts** is located in the lobby on the ground floor of the main hospital. Hours are Monday through Friday, **6:00am to 8:00pm**; Saturday, **6:00am to 2:00pm**; Sunday, **6:00am to 12:00pm**.
- **The Hospitality Room** offers comfortable seats, books, magazines, TV, and coffee and other refreshments. The Hospitality Room is located on the ground floor near the Radiation Department. Ask at the Information Desk, in the lobby, for the location. Hours are Monday through Friday, **8:00am to 2:30pm**.
- **The Resource Center for Patients & Families** offers cancer information, resources and support; a complimentary wig program for cancer patients; a lending library of laptops, DVDs, CDs, etc; computers and printers. The Resource Center staff will deliver any of these services directly to inpatients by request.
- **Family lounges** are available on each floor of the hospital.
- **Free wireless internet** is available throughout the hospital.

Going Home

Your doctor will determine on what day you can go home. Before you leave the hospital, your nurse will review the written discharge instructions prepared by your doctor to help you care for yourself at home.

Please don't hesitate to ask the nurse if you have questions or are unclear about any of the instructions.

We want to make sure that you feel ready to take care of yourself at home. Here is a list of things you will need to know when you are home:

- **Medications:** You'll receive the prescriptions you need. You and your nurse will review the medications your doctor ordered and discuss when and how you are to take them.
- **Homecare:** If your doctor and case manager ordered homecare or other assistance for your return to your home, the nurse will review the services that will be provided.
- **Your Daily Activities:** Your doctor may have requested that you restrict certain activities for a while, such as taking a bath, driving, or carrying anything that weighs more than five pounds. The nurse will review these restrictions with you.
- **Caring for Your Incision:** The nurse will make certain you understand how to clean your incision or change the dressing, and when you can take a shower or a tub bath.
- **Caring for Catheter, Lines, or Tubes:** Catheters, central lines, drains, and tubes have special homecare instructions. Your nurse will review these with you before you leave. Please make sure you are comfortable with the instructions before you go home. We have video/DVD instructions and brochures available. Our case managers are also always available to help you with your homecare needs.

- **Rest and Exercise:** Your discharge instructions may specify how and when you are to rest. Perhaps you'll be told to stay in bed for a few days, or to prop your feet up when you sit. You also may be asked to perform certain exercises regularly, such as leg and breathing exercises.
- **Diet:** The nurse will inform you if you may return to your normal diet at home or if there is a special diet your doctor wants you to follow. If you need further information or instructions for your special diet, ask your nurse to contact the dietitian.
- **Your Follow-up Visits:** The nurse will give you information on your follow-up visits before you leave.

Help With Your Return Home

Once you are home, be certain to follow your doctor's instructions carefully. You may want to keep a list of questions to ask your doctor at your next scheduled follow-up visit. These Roswell Park staff members will help you with your return home:

- **Case Managers:** Case managers are registered nurses (RN) responsible for managing and coordinating resources and medical support services to ease your transition from hospital to home. Assigned to one of the Roswell Park Cancer Centers, case managers understand the special needs of our patients with specific kinds of cancer. If you require it, your case manager will arrange homecare, special equipment, or other home services.

If you feel you will need extra help when you return home, please ask to speak to your case manager. We want you to be comfortable with your discharge and make sure you are ready to care for yourself at home. We will do everything we can to ensure a smooth transition.

- **Medical Social Workers (MSW):** Our staff social workers assist with discharge planning for patients who are to be transferred to rehabilitation, long-term care, hospice, and other facilities.

Who Do I Call if I Have Medical Questions?

You will have a business card with the name and number of your Roswell Park doctor and the center where you are receiving your care. Please keep this card handy. Roswell Park centers are open Monday through Friday from **8:00am to 5:00pm**.

After 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays, call **(716) 845-2300** and the operator will connect you to the physician on call who can assist you.

Call your Roswell Park doctor and/or nurse if:

- you have questions on your condition
- you have questions on side effects from your treatment
- you need to make or change an appointment
- you need a prescription refill

Call your primary care physician if:

- you have medical questions **not** connected to your cancer treatment
- you have questions on medications that are **not** part of your cancer treatment
- you have general health questions or need routine tests or exams

Call Case Management if:

- you need help at home. Case Management can be reached at **(716) 845-5735**.

Where Do I Go if I Have an Emergency?

If you require medical attention outside of business hours and/or are directed to go to the emergency room, please go to one of the emergency rooms indicated below:

- *If you live in the Buffalo area, please go to:*
 - Buffalo General Hospital Emergency Department
 - Catholic Health System Hospital Emergency Department (such as Sisters of Charity Hospital or Mercy Hospital)

Roswell Park has collaborative relationships with Buffalo General Hospital and the Catholic Health System to help you in the case of an emergency or an unplanned hospitalization. The doctors and nurses at these hospitals have access to your Roswell Park medical records and will work with us to coordinate your medical care. If admitted to Buffalo General Hospital or a Catholic Health Center hospital, it will be under the care of a collaborating team of physicians and the oversight of your Roswell Park doctor. Remember to bring your green Roswell Park ID card to help them access your records.

- *If you live outside of the Buffalo area, please go directly to your nearest hospital emergency department.*

Examples of emergencies include:

- your temperature is above 101°F (38°C) or you have chills
- you have unusual or severe pain not relieved by medication
- your incision becomes red, swollen, or painful; feels hot to touch; or is draining pus or a foul-smelling discharge
- you have a dramatic increase in nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea that is unrelieved by prescribed medications

Please **call 911** immediately if you feel you are in a life-threatening situation such as:

- you suddenly have trouble breathing or start having chest pain
- you develop severe pain in your abdomen or chest
- you have a change in your level of consciousness, vision, or strength

Patients' Bill of Rights

As a patient in a New York State hospital, you have the right to:

- 1.** Understand and use these rights. If for any reason you do not understand or you need help, the hospital **MUST** provide assistance, including an interpreter.
- 2.** Receive treatment without discrimination as to age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or source of payment.
- 3.** Receive considerate and respectful care in a clean and safe environment free of unnecessary restraints.
- 4.** Receive emergency care if you need it.
- 5.** Be informed of the name and position of the doctor who will be in charge of your care in the hospital.
- 6.** Know the names, positions and functions of any hospital staff involved in your care and refuse their treatment, examination or observation.
- 7.** A non-smoking room.
- 8.** Receive complete information about your diagnosis, treatment and prognosis.
- 9.** Receive all the information that you need to give informed consent for any proposed procedure or treatment. This information shall include the possible risks and benefits of the procedure or treatment.
- 10.** Receive all the information you need to give informed consent for an order not to resuscitate. You also have the right to designate an individual to give this consent for you if you are too ill to do so. If you would like additional information, ask for a copy of the pamphlet "Do Not Resuscitate Orders: Guide for Patients and Families."

- 11.** Refuse treatment and be told what effect this may have on your health.
- 12.** Refuse to take part in research. In deciding whether or not to participate, you have the right to a full explanation.
- 13.** Privacy while in the hospital and confidentiality of all information and records regarding your care.
- 14.** Participate in all decisions about your treatment and discharge from the hospital. The hospital must provide you with a written discharge plan and written description of how you can appeal your discharge.
- 15.** Review your medical record without charge. Obtain a copy of your medical record for which the hospital can charge a reasonable fee. You cannot be denied a copy solely because you cannot afford to pay.
- 16.** Receive an itemized bill and explanation of all charges.
- 17.** Complain without fear of reprisals about the care and services you are receiving and to have the hospital respond to you and if you request it, a written response. If you are not satisfied with the hospital's response, you can complain to the New York State Health Department. The hospital must provide you with the Health Department telephone number.
- 18.** Authorize those family members and other adults who will be given priority to visit consistent with your ability to receive visitors.
- 19.** Make known your wishes in regard to anatomical gifts. You may document your wishes in your healthcare proxy or on a donor card, available from the hospital.



Roswell Park Cancer Institute | Elm and Carlton Streets, Buffalo, NY 14263 | www.roswellpark.org