

Geisinger



It's such an old idea
it almost seems brand new.



Geisinger Community Medical Center

A guide for patients and their families



Welcome

A hospital stay can be a stressful experience. We want to make your time at Geisinger Community Medical Center as pleasant as we can. We know that feeling comfortable with your healthcare team and our hospital is important — not just to you, our patient, but also to your family and loved ones.

In this booklet, you'll find a wealth of information about your healthcare team, your room, available services and our hospital. Take some time to look through it. Give a copy to your closest family member. It will help you understand more about how we'll care for you during your stay. If at any time you have questions, don't hesitate to ask anyone involved in your care.

A commitment to quality

For the past five years, Geisinger Community Medical Center has been a resource for high-quality healthcare. We care for tens of thousands of residents and visitors in northeastern Pennsylvania. We have recruited top doctors from across the country to provide the most advanced and compassionate care we can. As the leading provider of critical care services in Scranton and all of Lackawanna County, we offer critical, therapeutic, diagnostic, rehabilitative and educational services and programs. With 293 beds, the medical center offers some of the most advanced technology in the region, including a Level II trauma center, Cancer Center, award-winning Heart and Vascular Institute and accredited Primary Stroke Center, renowned New Steps Joint Replacement Center and Lackawanna County's only inpatient behavioral health unit, as well as advanced and minimally invasive surgical options in a large number of subspecialties.

Thank you for choosing Geisinger Community Medical Center to care for you and your family. We will do all that we can to keep you informed and to make your time with us as comfortable as possible.

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General patient information

Patient rights and responsibilities

As a patient, you or your legally responsible party have the right to receive care without discrimination due to age, sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, income, education, national origin, ancestry, marital status, culture, language, disability, gender identity or who will pay your bill. If you would like further clarification of the patient rights and responsibilities as they pertain to you, please contact your nurse.

Your healthcare team

Physicians: Your doctor, or the hospitalist assigned to you, will direct your care and manage procedures and further evaluations by a specialist, if necessary.

Hospitalists: A hospitalist is a doctor who treats patients who have been admitted. The hospitalist will check on your condition, answer your questions and talk with your primary care doctor. Also, your hospitalist will communicate with your primary care doctor when you are discharged to keep them informed of your medical status.

Residents and fellows: A resident is a physician in training who has recently finished medical school. A fellow is a physician who is getting additional training in a specialty area, such as orthopaedics or infectious diseases.

Nurses: A team of professional registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and nurse assistants will provide skilled care around the clock and stay informed about your needs and condition. They are the healthcare professionals you will probably see most often. They can answer many questions and will help you communicate questions or concerns to other members of the healthcare team when necessary.

Physician assistants: Physician assistants are licensed and certified healthcare professionals who practice medicine in partnership with your doctor.

Pharmacists: Our staff of registered pharmacists and certified pharmacy technicians will monitor and evaluate all of your medication orders 24 hours a day. They will make sure that you are getting the right medications at the right dose.

Therapists: If physical, occupational, respiratory or speech therapy is something you need, our team of experienced therapists will help you get back your independence and quality of life.

Diagnostic team: Any tests or procedures that you need will be done by specially trained technicians. Some of these can be done in your room; others may need to be done in specially equipped areas of the hospital.

Patient advocates: If you have any problems or concerns about your care in the hospital, you may want to talk to a patient advocate. They are here to do exactly what their title says — advocate for you and make sure your concerns are addressed and your questions are answered. To contact a patient advocate, dial 8005 or 8777. Patient advocates are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Leave your name and a number where you can be reached, and an advocate will return your call as quickly as possible. If your concern requires immediate attention, your nurse can help locate a patient advocate.

Care Management

If you will need further care after your discharge, ask to see a Care Management representative. These specialized nurses and social workers work with you, your family, your doctor, the healthcare team and your insurance company to help you make a smooth transition to home, a rehabilitation center or a skilled nursing facility. They will help you identify and arrange home or hospice care, including medical equipment, so that you may continue to recuperate from your illness or surgery.

To contact a Care Management representative, dial 8224. Leave your name and room number, and they'll get back to you as soon as possible. If your concern requires immediate attention, tell your nurse.

MyGeisinger

MyGeisinger is a secure, online customer service and communications tool that allows patients to interact with their Geisinger doctor and see part of their outpatient electronic medical record. Sign up to become a MyGeisinger user, and you'll be able to manage your health online and take advantage of the following features:

- Send a secure message to your doctor
- Schedule appointments with your Geisinger primary care provider and women's health provider
- Get test results, plus check and graph your lab and diagnostic test results
- Access portions of your medical record and your family's records
- Request renewal of prescriptions and pay your bill

Visit MyGeisinger.org to sign up today.

Infection control

Hand washing: At Geisinger we require all healthcare workers to wash their hands before they enter your room. They may do this by using the hand sanitizer outside your door or by washing at the sink. We also encourage your visitors to use the hand sanitizer before and after they visit you. Hand washing is the most important, proven way to protect you from getting an infection while you are in the hospital.

Isolation rooms: Patients who have an infection that could spread to others could be assigned to a hospital room that requires precautions, such as gowns, gloves or a mask. This is done for your safety and the safety of your visitors and our staff. If your condition requires that you be in an isolation room, the reasons and any necessary procedures for visitors will be fully explained to you.

Patient privacy

Geisinger respects your privacy. Our privacy practices regarding your Protected Health Information (PHI) are outlined in our Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP) on posters located in the hallways or available as a brochure from your nurse.

Patient meals

Under the supervision of registered dietitians, you will be served three appetizing, nutritious meals daily. You will receive a menu based on the diet your doctor has prescribed. Breakfast is served between 8 and 9 a.m.; lunch between noon and 1 p.m.; and dinner between 5 and 6 p.m. If you have any special dietary needs or restrictions, tell your nurse.

Spiritual Care services

If you would like to speak with a chaplain or member of the clergy from your faith, ask a member of your healthcare team or dial 8134 on a hospital phone. The GCMC chapel is located off of the hospital main lobby near the main elevators.

Language interpreter

Free interpretation services are available at all times for patients and their families, with 200 languages and dialects as well as American Sign Language. Interpretation options include real-time video chat, called *My Accessible Real Time Trusted Interpreter*. Interpreters are available on a telephone service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On-site sign language interpreters can be arranged in advance. To arrange this service, contact your nurse.

Patient safety

Medications

You will be asked to list all your medications when your history is taken before or during admission. Your nursing team may also ask about your medications once you are admitted. When describing the medications you are taking, make sure you include over-the-counter drugs and vitamins or other nutritional supplements.

Fall prevention

We want you to remain safe and comfortable when getting into or out of a bed or a wheelchair. To avoid slipping or straining yourself, please ask for help from our nursing staff.

Rapid response team (RRT)

RRTs are in-house, on-call groups of doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists and others who respond swiftly if a patient is in physical distress or shows warning signs of a rapid physical decline.

- Warning signs: Difficulty breathing, slurred speech, confusion or agitation, chest pain or changes in heart rate or blood pressure.

Family members, visitors, employees and even patients themselves can summon an RRT if an adverse change in a patient's condition is noticed.

- To activate an RRT: Dial 0 on any hospital phone and say "Rapid response team to (patient's name) at (room number)."

Colors of safety

Geisinger Health System has adopted a statewide patient-safety initiative in which patients wear color-coded wristbands to identify certain healthcare needs. These alert staff, family and other caregivers to your special needs to ensure the safest healthcare possible.

The color codes are:

- Neon green: Latex allergy
- Pink: Restricted extremity
- Purple: Do not resuscitate
- Red: Allergy
- Yellow: Fall risk

Please notify your nurse if you are in any of the above risk categories.

The following colors listed below apply only to Geisinger Health System:

- Orange: Anticoagulation (blood-thinning) therapy
- Red and white stripes: Blood conservation program (procedures done without blood transfusions)
- Tan: Communication barrier (deaf, blind, need for an interpreter, etc.)

Upon admission to the hospital, please remove any wristbands or bracelets that may confuse or distract your care providers. If the hospital-supplied wristband breaks or falls off, call your nurse to have another reapplied immediately.

Safety rounds

To help maintain your comfort and safety while in our hospital, we conduct hourly rounds to attend to your needs.

During these rounds, we will ask questions like:

- Do you have any pain or discomfort?
- Do you need assistance to the bathroom?
- Do you need something to drink? (If allowed by your physician)
- Do you need help repositioning in the bed or chair to get comfortable?
- Is everything you need within your reach?

Please remind us if you find this is not being done. Our job is to keep you safe and comfortable.

Room accommodations

Call button

If you need help or have questions about your care, a call button is located at your bedside. A nurse will respond as quickly as possible.

Room temperature

If your room is too hot or too cold, tell your nurse and we'll adjust the room temperature.

Environmental services

A representative from Environmental Services will clean and disinfect your room and restroom daily, unless you are being discharged. If you have questions about the condition of your room or need your linens changed, please alert Environmental Services at extension 8020.

Television

Use the remote control on your bed to access the free TV service, adjust the sound and change channels. If you have a question, call extension 8046. To relax to soothing music and images, turn to channel 16. Your nurse can answer questions about the TV remote.

Personal appliances

You may use electrical appliances, including razors, hair dryers and heating pads, as well as most battery-operated appliances. However, leave all personal TVs, electric radios, stereo equipment, curling irons and two-way radios at home.

Telephone service

All rooms are equipped with a telephone. To use:

Free local call (in the 570 area code)

- Dial 9 + seven-digit number

Long-distance call

- Dial 0 to reach the hospital operator, who will connect you to the proper service.

Calling card

- Dial 9 + 0 and follow your phone carrier's instructions to dial.

Debit card

- Dial 9 + 0 and follow the instructions on the debit card.

Collect call

- Dial 9 + 0 + ten-digit number (including area code).

Your phone number

When your family and friends want to call, they can reach you as follows:

- Dial 570-703-8 + your room number. For example, to call room 450, the number would be 570-703-8450.
- To reach patients in the Cardiac Step-Down Care Unit, callers should dial 570-703-8000 and ask to be connected to your room.

Valuables

Please don't bring cash, credit cards or jewelry with you to the hospital. If you must bring valuables, request that they be stored in a hospital safe. If you wear dentures or a partial dental plate, please ask your nurse for a denture cup.

Patient discharge

Preparing for discharge

We want to be sure you understand what to expect when you are ready to leave the hospital. Your doctor will write a discharge order for you, whether you are going home or to another facility for rehabilitation or continued therapy. If you are being sent home, you'll receive specific instructions about how to care for yourself. Never hesitate to ask your healthcare team questions to be sure you understand everything. You can expect to be discharged from the hospital by noon. In most cases, we recommend that you have someone available to drive you home after a hospital stay.

Patient billing

We will bill your insurance provider for the costs associated with your hospitalization. You may be billed for any outstanding balance. Call 800-640-4206 with billing questions.

Financial assistance

Geisinger Health System is committed to providing medically necessary healthcare to those in need, regardless of their ability to pay. Financial assistance is available for medically necessary care. Patients may apply for financial assistance at any time — before, during or after their care. Eligibility is based upon the U.S. Government's Federal Poverty Guidelines, which are updated annually.

To learn more about Geisinger's financial assistance policies, or to apply for financial assistance for your care, please call a patient service representative at 800-640-4206.

For your guests

Smoking policy

As part of our commitment to good health, Geisinger Community Medical Center is smoke-free and prohibits smoking in rooms, the lobby, parking areas and anywhere while on the Geisinger Community Medical Center campus. For information on how to quit using tobacco products, call the Pennsylvania Quitline toll-free at 800-QUIT-NOW.

ATMs

An ATM, located in the main lobby of the hospital, is available for your use. The bank responsible for the ATM charges a convenience fee.

Food and beverage

Geisinger Community Medical Center offers several dining options for your guests:

- The Atrium Café is on the ground level of the hospital and sells hot meals, deli sandwiches, salad bar, soup, pizza, snacks and drinks. It is open Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and on weekends from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- The Lobby Coffee Shop is in the main lobby on the first floor, and serves a variety of grab-and-go items such as sandwiches, salads, bagels, fresh-baked cookies, smoothies and Peet's coffee and tea. It is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Vending machines are located in the main lobby across from the coffee shop and in the Atrium Café on the ground level. They provide snacks and soft drinks and are available 24/7.

Gift shop

The GCMC Gift Shop is located in the main lobby on the first floor of the hospital. It offers a wide selection of items, including gifts, magazines and books, toys, newspapers, snacks, greeting cards and personal items.

Visitors can call the gift shop at 570-703-8159 to purchase an item and have it delivered directly to a patient's room. Staffed by volunteers, the gift shop is open Mondays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m.

Internet access

Free wireless Internet access is available using the Geisinger Guest connection. The physical security of your personal device is your responsibility.

Mail and flowers

Letters and packages, delivered daily, should be addressed using your full name and room number. Flowers will be delivered to your room by one of our volunteers. Please note that flowers are not permitted in the intensive care unit (ICU).

Newspapers

Local and national newspapers are available for purchase in the GCMC Gift Shop.

Free parking

Free parking is available for patients and families in the GCMC Visitor Parking Garage across from the hospital on the corner of Colfax Avenue and Mulberry Street.

Valet parking

As an added service to patients and visitors, free valet parking is available at the hospital's Mulberry Street main entrance.

Public transportation

The public COLTS bus stops near GCMC on the corner of Mulberry Street and Colfax Avenue.

Security

Security personnel are available 24 hours a day. Please tell your nurse if you have a security concern.

Visiting hours

You may decide if you want visitors or not while in the hospital. You may also choose which persons can visit during your stay. These individuals do not need to be legally related to you. If you are unable to make this decision, you may choose a support person to decide who can visit.

Because we understand that family and friends play an important role in the healing process, family and friends may visit you 24/7, but we urge you to use discretion in monitoring the number of guests you have visiting at one time. Routine visitation is between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. daily. The period from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. is considered an important quiet time for patients and loved ones to get needed rest. Routine visitation is not encouraged during this time.

Visitors and their children should be in good health before visiting. There may be times when visitors are asked to briefly step out of the room so we can provide you private and uninterrupted care. Visitors after 9 p.m. must enter the hospital through the Emergency Department. All other entrances will be locked. Rest and relaxation promote healing, so we ask that staff and visitors use quiet voices while in patient care areas.

Lodging

Ronald McDonald Family Room: Geisinger Community Medical Center has a Ronald McDonald Family Room located on the third floor of the hospital next to our Pediatric Department. This room provides a refuge for a family right in the hospital, located just steps from their child.

Call extension 7208 for information and availability on this room, or ask for the nursing supervisor in Pediatrics.

Ronald McDonald House: For families of children undergoing medical procedures, testing or treatment for a serious illness, accommodations may be available at Ronald McDonald House, a home away from home.

The Ronald McDonald House of Scranton is located at 322 Wheeler Ave., within one block of GCMC. The house offers a pleasant temporary home for several families at a time. When families want to be close to loved ones undergoing long-term treatment, the Ronald McDonald House of Scranton gives them an option other than a hotel room. With a family kitchen, private family bedrooms, comfortable living areas and plenty of indoor and outdoor play room for the children, it is a quiet place for families to stay after a day at the hospital. A full-time administrative manager and many volunteers run the house. The donation is \$8 a night, but all visitors will be accommodated regardless of their ability to pay, if space allows.

Call 570-969-8998 for availability.

Notes:

Questions?

Our central phone number is 570-703-8000. Note that inside GCMC, a four-digit number is all that's needed. Here is a list of numbers most frequently used by patients:

Administration	7240
Billing questions	800-640-4206
Care management	8224
Gift shop	8159
Operator	8000 or dial 0
Pastoral care	8134 or dial 0
Patient advocates (complaints/concerns)	8005 or 8777
Security	8030 or dial 0



We strive for excellence

Our goal is to provide you and your loved ones with the best possible care. We measure our performance in achieving patient satisfaction with a survey. You may be randomly selected to complete a survey that is mailed to your home in the next few weeks.

If you find that we missed the mark in any way, please let us know your concerns as soon as possible.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in us. It has been a pleasure caring for you.

Geisinger