

Communications Department

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Visitors urged to Stay Away

People wishing to visit the Royal United Hospital in Bath are being asked: "Help us to look after your loved ones by staying away unless your visit is absolutely essential."

Seasonal diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V) in the community is significantly higher than is usual for the time of year and the RUH has seen an increase of cases linked to visitors coming in to the hospital with symptoms.

As symptoms may not appear for 12 – 48 hours, someone may feel perfectly well even though they are infected with D&V, but then be taken ill inside the hospital. Two wards have had to close this week due to visitors bringing in infections. For this reason the RUH is asking that no one visit unless absolutely essential, to help control the spread of infection and to protect their friends and family members who are in hospital. Norovirus is highly contagious and spreads quickly, particularly to vulnerable and ill people, and so it is particularly important that children do not visit the hospital.

The RUH is controlling the spread of infection by isolating patients with confirmed norovirus, implementing barrier nursing and by closing wards with affected patients to new admissions. But with such a large area of public space, and so many people passing through the doors, the RUH is appealing for the support of the local community in helping to make sure this infectious virus does not spread further.

Norovirus causes an unpleasant but generally short-lived illness that usually lasts about three days. People can feel quite poorly whilst they are ill, but there is no specific treatment other than rest and lots of drinks to replace lost fluids.

People who are otherwise fit and healthy will make a full recovery without any medical intervention. If the symptoms persist, or seem to be getting worse, people should phone NHS Direct, the 24-hour nurse-led health advice service on 0856 46 47. Bath has an NHS Walk In centre at the Riverside Health Centre on James Street West, Bath, BA1 2BT, open from 7am - 10pm daily and offers advice and treatment without an appointment.

Ends