

## When a Loved One Needs Critical Care

We know that this may be a trying and stressful time for you and your loved one. The health-care team at Gillette's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) is composed of doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, patient care technicians, social workers, chaplains, child life specialists and others. We will work with you to make your loved one's stay go as well as possible. You can help by following these few suggestions.

- Before you visit the patient for the first time, ask what you should expect. That information will help prepare you for the monitors and other equipment we use in the critical care unit as well as the patient's activity level.
- Designate one family member to be the contact person for the nurse and medical staff.
- Keep a notebook handy. Note taking will help you remember questions you want to ask and keep track of information you need to share with other family members.
- You may visit at the patient's bedside in the PICU. Please limit the number of visitors to no more than two at a time. There is a family lounge where other guests can wait.
- A sleeping area is provided for parents of children in the PICU. But keep in mind that the PICU is an open unit, and at times, we may have other patients. We ask you to respect their privacy and confidentiality.
- The Ronald McDonald Family Room is a wonderful space for family respite. Please contact your Gillette social worker for more information or for a referral to use an overnight room.
- Ask questions about patient care. We want you to understand the care we are providing and will try to answer your questions, to the best of our ability.
- Inform us of special needs your loved one may have, such as diet, sleep habits, or special routines. Feel free to decorate the patient's area and play the patient's favorite music.
- Please ask the nursing staff how you can be involved in patient care. (You might, for example, help swab the mouth, apply lotion to the skin, or help with range-of-motion exercises.)
- Take care of yourself. Eat a proper diet, get enough sleep and take some time away from the hospital. Keeping yourself strong will enable you to provide healing support.
- If you have any concerns with a member of the health-care team, ask to speak with the charge nurse, nurse manager or nurse supervisor.

[Make An Appointment](#) [651-290-8707](tel:651-290-8707)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](tel:651-229-3890).