

About St. Vincent Medical Center

About St. Vincent Medical Center

St. Vincent Medical Center was founded in 1856 by the Daughters of Charity as Los Angeles' first hospital. Our mission is to administer care to our community through our Vincentian Values of Respect, Compassionate Service, Simplicity, Advocacy for the Poor and Inventiveness to Infinity. From its humble beginnings more than 150 years ago, the 347-bed hospital has evolved into a well-respected community partner serving both local residents and people from around the world.

World-Class Medical Treatment

Today, St. Vincent Medical Center is one of the West Coast's leading hospitals, providing healthcare services to the local community and patients worldwide. The hospital and its team of medical professionals are renowned for providing superior specialized services, including:

- advanced interventional and surgical approaches to treating heart-related conditions
- cancer treatment using the latest in radiation therapy and vaccines
- surgical options for those suffering from ear, hearing and skull-base disorders
- multi-organ transplantation
- treatment of spine injuries and disorders, including physical therapy through surgery
- use of ancient philosophies for health and healing to treat musculoskeletal problems, smoking addiction, side effects of cancer treatment, chronic pain and other illnesses and conditions

Spiritual Care

Pastoral visitors and community Clergy of various cultures and faith traditions also are available to visit patients at the hospital. Upon request, Eucharistic ministers may provide daily visits and Communion to the hospital's Catholic patients. Roman Catholic priests routinely visit the hospital's patients and offer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick upon a patient's or family's request. Additionally, Chaplains are available to help with end of life issues and ethical and moral questions regarding healthcare decisions. Chaplains also can help articulate and formalize your healthcare choices, or directives, and facilitate the completion of a formal Advance Healthcare Directive. To contact a Chaplain, please dial extension 7341 from any hospital phone, or simply dial the hospital operator.

The Chapel of the Sacred Heart is located in the main lobby of the hospital on the third floor. It is open and available 24 hours a day for quiet meditation and prayer. The Mass schedule is as follows:

- Monday – Friday: 11:30 a.m.
- Saturday: 4 p.m.
- Sunday: 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The Mass and all religious services are televised on Channel 10 for patients who are unable to physically attend mass. Families are invited to attend mass in the Chapel. A variety of quiet meditation and inspirational instrumental music also is available on Channel 10.

About St. Vincent Medical Center

Community Outreach Programs

Since the hospital's inception, its associates have been committed to serving the local residents through numerous community-based programs, including:

- **St. Vincent Meals on Wheels** – each day, this program and its volunteers provides nutritious meals for more than 2,400 people in Los Angeles who may be homebound or unable to shop and cook for themselves. The program also offers sit-down meals to mobile seniors each afternoon at Precious Blood Catholic Church in Los Angeles.
- **Casa de Amigos de San Vicente** – This on-campus community center provides local youths and families access to after-school tutoring, computer training, job referrals, group and family counseling, parenting classes, English-language classes, gang-prevention seminars and more.
- **Cancer Awareness and Prevention Program** – through service such as the mobile mammography program, the program serves to raise awareness of breast cancer among at-risk populations through screening and education.
- **Community Health Ministry** – this program takes healthcare information and screening services to churches, community agencies and faith-based organizations.
- **High School Athletic Outreach Program** – this program provides quality medical care to prevent and treat injuries in students participating in interscholastic athletics at the high-school level. The hospital provides certified athletic trainers to 10 area high schools.

Visitor Information

Location

St. Vincent Medical Center is located near downtown Los Angeles, on the Southwest corner of Third Street and South Alvarado Street. A map of the surrounding area is provided for you in the hospital's Visitor Guide.

Parking

Visitors may park in the main hospital parking lot, which is located at the corner of Third Street at Alvarado. Parking also is available at the Professional Office Building, which is located at 201 S. Alvarado Street. Passes for long-term parking are available at the Main parking lot attendant booth.

In addition, valet parking is available in the main parking lot to patients who wish to pay for this service.

Visiting Hours

All visitors must check in with the information desk located in the main lobby of the hospital prior to visiting patients. Family and friends may visit guests during the hospital's general visiting hours, which are 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. daily. Intensive and Cardiac Care units may have more restricted visiting hours, so please check with the patient's nurse to confirm visitation hours. Children may visit patients, but they must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Waiting Rooms

Waiting rooms are available on each floor, and there is a comfortable lounge with a designated children's area on the 9th floor. A map is provided to you in the hospital's Visitor Guide, which shows the location of each floor's waiting rooms.

Gift Shop

The gift shop is located in the main lobby of the hospital on the third floor, adjacent to the main entrance. For your convenience, the gift shop has flowers and gifts available for delivery to patient rooms. To make arrangements for delivery, please call 213-484-5580. The St. Vincent Medical Center Auxiliary manages the gift shop, and all proceeds are directed toward maintaining and improving programs at the hospital.

ATM Machines

ATM machines are located outside the cafeteria on the 2nd floor – near the vending machines – as well as in front of the Professional Office Building, which is located at 201 South Alvarado Street.

Visitor Information

Cafeteria and Vending Machines

The hospital cafeteria features a grill, grab-and-go specials, soup, salad bar, sandwiches and a wide variety of beverages. The cafeteria is located on the second floor of the hospital. The cafeteria is open seven days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

A full array of vending machines, including ice cream, coffee, snacks, beverages and cold food, can be found on the second floor of the hospital, immediately outside the entrance to the cafeteria. Snack and soda machines also are located in Seton Hall, as well as in the waiting rooms on the first and ninth floors.

Valuables

Patients, please remember to leave your valuables at home, including jewelry, cash and wallets. Visitors, please do not leave valuables or personal belongings unattended while visiting your loved one at the hospital. Small valuables may be locked in the hospital safe if a patient's family or friends are unable to take the patient's personal belongings home.

Spiritual Services

Pastoral visitors and community Clergy of various cultures and faith traditions also are available to visit patients at the hospital. Upon request, Eucharistic ministers may provide daily visits and Communion to the hospital's Catholic patients. Roman Catholic priests routinely visit the hospital's patients and offer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick upon a patient's or family's request. Additionally, Chaplains are available to help with end of life issues and ethical and moral questions regarding healthcare decisions. Chaplains also can help articulate and formalize your healthcare choices, or directives, and facilitate the completion of a formal Advance Healthcare Directive. To contact a Chaplain, please dial extension 7341 from any hospital phone, or simply dial the hospital operator.

The Chapel of the Sacred Heart is located in the main lobby of the hospital on the third floor. It is open and available 24 hours a day for quiet meditation and prayer. The Mass schedule is as follows:

- Monday – Friday: 11:30 a.m.
- Saturday: 4 p.m.
- Sunday: 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The Mass and all religious services are televised on Channel 10 for patients who are unable to physically attend mass. Families are invited to attend mass in the Chapel. A variety of quiet meditation and inspirational instrumental music also is available on Channel 10.

Visitor Information

Guest Services

The hospital's Patient Relations and Guest Services representatives are available to assist patients and their loved one with any concerns they have. A Patient Relations Specialist is available Monday through Friday by dialing 213-484-7462, or extension 7462 from any hospital phone. During the week, the Patient Relations Specialist on duty can be reached by pager at 213-508-2223, and on the weekends at 213-508-1813.

Pain Management

St. Vincent Medical Center has an obligation and commitment to assess and manage our patient's pain. Our caregivers are committed to minimizing the incidence and severity of pain. Recognizing that pain management involves the mind, body and spirit of our patients, we offer videos, books, tape players, meditation tapes and relaxing instrumental tapes that can help minimize discomfort when used in conjunction with your medical care.

Language Assistance

The hospital offers a Language Line service for patients who speak limited or no English. The Language Line is a professional interpretation telephone service that can facilitate a clearly understood conversation between people who speak different languages. To access the Language Line service, please ask a member of the admitting department or your healthcare team. In addition to the Language Line service, patients also may request an in-house interpreter if one is available.

Patient Identification

All patients receive an identification band, which allows hospital staff to verify a patient's name, patient number and physician name. Patient identification bands should not be removed until the patient is discharged from the hospital. If the patient's identification band comes off, a nurse should be notified immediately so another band can be made.

Staff Identification

All St. Vincent Medical Center employees are required to wear a photo identification badge while on duty. Identification badges include the employee's photo, first name, last name, title and department. If anyone refuses to show you his or her identification badge, a nurse or the nursing supervisor should be notified immediately.

Smoking

In the interest of the hospital's patients, St. Vincent Medical Center maintains a smoke-free environment. Designated smoking areas include the hospital cafeteria patio on the second floor, the ramp area of the north hospital entrance and the garden area outside Seton Hall. Patients must have their physician's order to be allowed to smoke in one of the three designated areas of the hospital. Due to the presence of hospital gases (i.e. oxygen), smoking inside of the hospital building is strictly prohibited.

Visitor Information

Personal Safety

The safety of our patients and guests is a priority for the hospital. Please feel free to call for assistance at any time. Patients should contact their nurse immediately should they feel concern for their safety.

Fire and Disaster Drills

To keep our staff well prepared for emergency situations, the Los Angeles Fire Department requires that the hospital perform periodic testing of the Fire Life Safety System. The hospital conducts fire and disaster drills on a regular basis. Please do not be alarmed if your door is closed during one of these periodic drills, as it is standard hospital procedure. Patients will not be asked to leave their room, nor will they have to participate in the drill.

If a real emergency were to occur, hospital staff members will keep patients and visitors informed and assist them as necessary.

Cell Phones/Two-Way Radios

To provide a safe environment for our patients, the hospital asks that patients and guests do not use personal communication devices (cellular phones, walkie-talkies) in sensitive areas where interference from these devices may increase the risk of medical equipment malfunction. There are signs posted in areas where cell phone use is restricted that read, "Use of Cell Phones Prohibited in this Area." In addition, the hospital asks that patients and guests refrain from using cell phones in the following areas:

- Third and sixth floor of the Doheny wing
- First, Fourth and Fifth floor of the main hospital building

Notary Public

Free notarization is available through our Guest Relations department, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by dialing extension 7223 or 7462. Proper valid identification is required for notarization services.

If You Are Having Surgery at St. Vincent Medical Center

Preparing for your Procedure

Your physician and nurse will explain to you the nature of your scheduled procedure, and how best to prepare for it. Below are several items to consider as you prepare for your procedure:

- **Pre-Admission Appointment** – if you have not done so already, please call your physician's office to schedule a pre-admission appointment 4-7 days before your surgery.
- **Pre-Admissions Paperwork and Information** – please fill out any documents prior to your arrival to ensure that your procedure happens on time. We also recommend that you come prepared with necessary identification, insurance cards and a list of medications you are currently taking.
- **Pre-Admission Testing** – tests such as x-rays and blood tests may be done at the hospital, or at any other facility that is approved by your health insurance provider. If your testing is completed at St. Vincent Medical Center, those tests will take place during your pre-admission appointment.
- **Prescriptions** – ask your physician about whether or not you should stop taking your regularly-scheduled medications or aspirin before surgery. If you are advised to continue taking your medications as directed, please take them with only a small sip of water the morning of your procedure.
- **Food and Drink** – please remember not to eat or drink anything, including water and even chewing gum, after midnight prior to your procedure. Even small amounts of food or liquid in your stomach can create a risk during your procedure. Your procedure could be cancelled or delayed if anything is taken by mouth after midnight prior to your procedure.
- **Smoking** – please refrain from smoking after midnight prior to your procedure.
- **Change in Medical Condition** – if you develop a cold, fever, persistent cough or change in your condition the week prior to your procedure, you must notify your physician. Your procedure may need to be delayed or postponed until you are well.
- **Questions and Concerns** – please feel free to write down any questions or concerns you have surrounding your procedure. Bring them with you the day of your procedure so that you can discuss your questions and concerns with your healthcare team.
- **Patient Advocate** – you may ask a family member or friend to accompany you to the hospital on the day of your procedure. This person can serve as your advocate and help ensure your comfort and that your healthcare directives are communicated properly and followed.
- **Valuables** – please bring only essential items with you to the hospital, and no more than \$5 in cash. If you must bring your wallet or valuables with you, please arrange to have a loved one look after your belongings during and after your procedure. Small valuables may be locked in the hospital safe. Please speak with your admitting representative or nurse to make arrangements for your valuables to be locked in the safe. The hospital cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen valuables that are not locked in the hospital safe.
- **Transportation** – please discuss with your physician whether you will be able to drive yourself home after your procedure, as you may need to make arrangements to have a family member or friend transport you to and from the hospital. You may not be released from the hospital until you are able to arrange for a ride home. The hospital's shuttle can drive patients home if they live within a 15-mile radius of the hospital. Please ask your physician's office to pre-arrange this service for you, if needed.
- **Staying in Los Angeles** – if you are from out of town, or find it more convenient to stay close to the hospital, you may want to stay at Seton Guest Center, which is located on hospital grounds, or at a local hotel for which the hospital has a contracted rate. Space is limited at Seton Guest Center. To check availability, please call 213-484-7767.

If You Are Having Surgery at St. Vincent Medical Center

About Anesthesia

An anesthesiologist is a physician trained to provide a pain-free state for patients during surgery, while maintaining heart and lung function. Your anesthesiologist also will monitor your condition until you leave the recovery room.

There are various forms of anesthesia. Your surgeon and anesthesiologist will consider your age, general health and type of surgery to determine which type of anesthesia is appropriate for you.

Here is a brief overview of the two most common forms of anesthesia:

- **General Anesthesia** – patients are put into an unconscious state, either by injection of medication into their vein and/or by breathing into a mask. Once the patient is asleep, a tube is placed in their nose or mouth and throat to assist breathing. A breathing machine or respirator also may be used.
- **Regional Anesthesia** – When a specific part of the body requires numbing, an anesthesiologist may inject an anesthetic around a nerve or into a vein in the surrounding area. A spinal anesthetic numbs the lower part of the body, and is general injected through the back into the spinal fluid. General anesthesia also may be used in conjunction with a spinal anesthetic. Epidural anesthesia is very similar to a spinal, with the exception that the epidural is injected into the area outside the spinal fluid.

The Day of Surgery

Proper preparation is important the day of your procedure. Please follow the following important instructions:

- Shower and wash your hair the morning of your procedure. Your doctor also may recommend that you use a special cleansing product to scrub the area where you will be having surgery.
- Do not wear make up or nail polish, as the skin and nails provide important signs of blood circulation
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing
- Leave all valuables at home, including jewelry, money and credit cards
- Bring storage cases for any eyeglasses, contact lenses, dentures or hearing aids you will be bringing to the hospital
- If you did not schedule a pre-admission appointment, please bring your health insurance card and forms with you, unless instructed otherwise
- Bring this folder with you, as it contains forms that you and your nurse will need, such as physician orders and consent forms.

If You Are Having Surgery at St. Vincent Medical Center

Patient Arrival

Please plan to arrive at the hospital 90 minutes to 2 hours prior to your procedure, or as directed by your pre-admission clinic nurse, to ensure that there is adequate time to fill out necessary forms and prepare for your procedure.

- **Outpatient Arrival** – On the day of your procedure, please report to the outpatient registration area, which is located on the 8th floor, to the right of the elevators. You will be asked to sign an informed consent form, which verifies that you and your doctor have discussed the procedure that is to be performed, the expectations that you have of each other and the risks associated with the procedure.
- **Inpatient Arrival** – The day of your procedure, please report to the Patient Access/Admitting department, which is located on the third floor of the hospital.

If your procedure is scheduled before 6 a.m., please enter the hospital through the main entrance, which is adjacent to the parking lot on Third Street.

The medical team responsible for your care will verify your identity, the procedure you are undergoing and the expected part of the body on which your procedure is to be performed. Your medical team will double check the information you provide against the documents provided by your physician's office, including x-rays. You will be asked these questions many times. You may find this process redundant and even irritating, but it must be done to ensure your safety.

Immediately preceding your procedure, you will be asked to change into a hospital gown and remove any hairpins, jewelry, dentures, contact lenses and/or glasses. The medical team will take care of these items and return them to you after your procedure. A nurse will then perform a simple pre-procedure examination, and then lead you to the area where your procedure will take place. You may speak with your doctor, nurse and anesthesiologist (if required for your procedure) prior to your procedure about any concerns or questions you may have.

Depending on the procedure you have, the physician, or another member of the health care team) who will perform your procedure will mark the correct location on your body where your procedure is to be performed. For example, if you are having a cataract removed only from your right eye, a mark will be made somewhere near your right eye. Immediately preceding the start of your procedure, a "time out" with the procedure team will be called. During this "time out," the members of the health care team assure themselves that they are performing the correct procedure, at the correct site and on the correct person.

While you are in surgery, your family and friends are welcome to stay in the waiting room on the 1st floor.

If You Are Having Surgery at St. Vincent Medical Center

After Your Procedure

Outpatient: After your procedure, you most likely will be taken to the short-stay unit for recovery and hospital discharge.

Inpatient: After your procedure, you will be taken to a recovery room where physicians and nurses will care for you, for one to two hours. After recovery, you will be taken directly to your assigned room.

Your physician or nurse will ask you about any pain you may have. If you are having pain, please inform your healthcare team early on so that they can treat your pain before it becomes too uncomfortable. If you have questions or concerns about any medication that is ordered for you, please raise these questions with your physician or nurse.

Your physician or nurse will provide you with written instructions for your recovery. Please remember to follow up with your physician regarding any therapy or medications that you may need during your recovery, as well as when you may resume certain activities including work, exercise and travel.

Information for an Inpatient Stay at St. Vincent Medical Center

Your Hospital Room

Each patient has a private room with a private bathroom. The hospital bed and mattress is adjustable and has side rails for the patient's safety. Each patient also has a call light within their reach, which can be used to call their nurse, adjust the television and room lights.

Television

Each patient room is equipped with its own television. Educational programs on topics such as nutrition, exercise and stress are shown regularly on the Health Care Focus channel (channel 6). Additionally, channel 15 provides programming geared toward oncology patients, channel 19 airs cardiology program and channel 21 shows educational programming regarding diabetes in English and Spanish. Chapel masses are shown on channel 10, daily at 11:30 a.m., Monday through Friday at 4 p.m., Saturdays at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Sundays. Many of the televisions are equipped with closed caption features for those patients with hearing impairments.

Telephone Service

Each room has a telephone that you may use for personal calls while you stay at the hospital. Callers can reach a patient by dialing (213) 484-7111, then pressing "7" and the patient's room number, or by calling the hospital's main number, 213-484-7111, and asking to be connected to the patient's room.

To place a phone call within California from the patient's telephone, listen for the dial tone and then dial, "9 – 1 – area code – phone number."

To make calls outside of California, listen for the dial tone and then dial "80," and the number. The call will be forwarded to the telephone company operator who will offer billing details. Calls may be billed via this operator to any calling card, most credit cards, collect or to the patient's home telephone number.

A Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and special telephones for patients with hearing difficulties are available upon request.

If You Are Having Surgery at St. Vincent Medical Center

Daily Menu Selections

Each day patients receive a menu based on the diet prescribed by their physician. A member of the Nutrition and Food Services department is available to help patients choose menu selections if you have difficulty making selections on your own, or have questions about the choices.

Meal Times

Patient meals are served during the following times:

- Breakfast: 7 – 8 a.m.
- Lunch: 12 – 1 p.m.
- Dinner: 5 – 6 p.m.

Nutritional Counseling

St. Vincent Medical Center offers out-patient nutritional counseling. Many insurance companies will cover nutritional counseling with a physician referral. For more information, please contact our registered dietitian at 213-484-7278.

Guest Meals

If family or friends want to eat in a patient's room, they may go to the cafeteria, buy a meal and bring it back to the patient's room.

Special Considerations

Each patient's diet, like their medications and treatments, is prescribed by their physician. If a patient is on a special diet, certain items may be restricted from them. Occasionally, a patient's meal may be delayed to accommodate special tests or treatments.

