

JULY 2015

## Tru-D, a new member of the clean team

**M** eet Tru-D. She's a 5-foot-5 germ-killing ultraviolet robot, and she's the newest member of the St. Jude Environmental Services team. Technically, Tru-D SmartUVC – short for Total Room Ultraviolet Disinfection – is a mobile, automated UV system used to completely disinfect patient areas. It works by generating UV light energy that changes the DNA structure of infectious cells, so they cannot reproduce. And cells that cannot reproduce cannot harm patients.

This technology allows the hospital staff to confidently clean patient areas, including ICUs, patient rooms, surgery suites, emergency rooms and public areas – killing germs, such as influenza, norovirus, *Clostridium difficile*, Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and other bacteria and viruses – even Ebola. Currently, the St. Jude staff is using Tru-D in the majority of patient rooms.

Tru-D is designed to work along-

side a hospital's regular cleaning and disinfecting program.

"We're so excited to welcome Tru-D," said Tracy Davis, Environmental Services supervisor. "This technology will be an important added line of defense against germs that could make our patients ill."

After a patient has been discharged, an Environmental Services staff member cleans the room using traditional methods, then Tru-D is rolled into the room to "finish the job." The machine is turned on from outside the room using a handheld remote control. The machine instantly analyzes the contents, shape and size of the room, then floods the targeted space (including shadows) with the proper amount of germ-killing energy from the UVC lamps that run up and down the sides of the device.

If you are passing by one of these rooms, you might see the blue glowing light coming from the windows or under the door. Tru-D spends what-

ever time is needed to kill infectious germs on surfaces before shutting down and letting the operator know she is finished cleaning.

The addition of Tru-D to the infection prevention team helps the St. Jude staff make sure the facility is as germ-free as possible for patients.



## G Clinic offers genetic testing, counseling

The Genetic Predisposition Clinic (G Clinic) started seeing patients as a primary service last month. The genetic counselors had already been seeing patients, their siblings and parents for consults. But, now a team of doctors and nurse practitioners work with the genetic counselors to evaluate and manage siblings younger than 18 years of age as primary patients, if the siblings test positive for a genetic condition that puts them at risk for cancer.

The Cancer Predisposition Program staff can help you understand how the risk for cancer can be inherited (passed from parent to child). They work closely with other St. Jude doctors and researchers to find new and better ways to help children who might have a higher cancer risk than normal.

Your child's St. Jude care team might refer you to this program for one of these reasons:

- Your child has a type of cancer that might be linked to a specific

genetic condition.

- Your child does not have cancer but has a genetic condition that increases the risk of getting cancer.
- Your child has certain physical features or other medical problems that could suggest that the child might be at greater risk (predisposed) to get certain types of cancer.

Patients going to G Clinic should check in at the south waiting area (where patients check in for both H and C Clinics). After being called to G Clinic, the patient will need to enter through the C Clinic door and be directed from there.

If you have questions about the Cancer Predisposition Program and how it might help your family, please talk to your primary clinic doctor. To learn more about the program, visit the St. Jude website ([www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org)) and type "Cancer Predisposition Program" into the search bar. You can also email G Clinic staff members directly at [gpteam@stjude.org](mailto:gpteam@stjude.org).

## A newsletter just for St. Jude parents

The *St. Jude Parents* newsletter is for you. The editors want to make sure that you receive it each month whether you are in the hospital, in housing or at home. At the beginning of each month, copies are placed in patient waiting areas, the Linda R. Hajar Family Resource Center and at the lobby information desks of the Patient Care Center and Chili's Care Center.

If you cannot pick up a copy of the newsletter, it can be sent to you by email. To be added to the monthly email list, send your request to [parents\\_newsletter@stjude.org](mailto:parents_newsletter@stjude.org) or call 901-595-4639. To subscribe to an online version of the newsletter visit [www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter](http://www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter).



## Talking about Medicines

### Check before crushing medicines

*By Shane Cross, PharmD, Pharmaceutical Services*

Tablets and capsules come in many shapes and sizes. Sometimes children have trouble swallowing them whole. In these cases, the staff might instruct parents to crush the tablets or open the capsules for easier use. While this method is OK for some drugs, you need to know that not all medicines should be crushed or opened.

Some tablets and capsules are designed to release medicine slowly through time. These types of drugs are often called “extended release” or “sustained release.” If crushed, they could release all of the medicine at one time, and with some drugs this could be dangerous.

Other medicines have special coatings that either protect the stomach from irritation by the drug or prevent the stomach from breaking down the drug too soon. If you remove or break these coatings, then the medicine could hurt the stomach or become less effective than usual.

If you have questions about whether or not you should crush or open your child’s medicines, check with a St. Jude pharmacist. Together, we can work as a team to ensure that your child gets the safest and most effective treatment.

### Spiritual Care Services offers Christian vacation bible school for patients, siblings

The chaplains in Spiritual Care Services will offer a theme park-like vacation bible school this month. VBS is a Christian program for elementary-aged patients and siblings. It will be held July 6–10 from 10:30–11:30 a.m. in the Patient Care Center Board Room. The message, crafts and activities each day address different aspects of the St. Jude experience.

To learn more about VBS or to register your child or children, please email [kimberly.russell@stjude.org](mailto:kimberly.russell@stjude.org) or speak with one of the chaplains today.

**Have you registered for the online patient portal, called *My St. Jude*? Visit [www.stjude.org/mystjude](http://www.stjude.org/mystjude) for details.**

## Some parking spaces and entrances are for isolation patients only

Please keep in mind that isolation entrances, parking spaces and the isolation area of the Ambulatory Care Unit (ACU) are for patients who are currently in isolation or have appointments in this area to see if they need to be placed in isolation.

The parking spaces for the isolation entrances are limited and should only be used if your child is in isolation or being evaluated for isolation. To prevent the spread of infection, the staff wants to keep both isolated patients and non-isolated patients separate and safe.

Children who are not in isolation should never exit the building through the isolation area of the

ACU. Exiting through the isolation area puts your child at risk for getting an infection.

If you suspect that your child might have an illness that could spread to others, a clinical staff member must examine your child before he comes near other patients. When it is time for your child to return to St. Jude, please call the nurse scheduler in your child’s clinic and tell that staff member about the illness.

If needed, the nurse scheduler will plan an ACU isolation visit for your child. If you are calling after normal clinic hours, ask to speak to the nursing coordinator.



## St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

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262 Danny Thomas Place  
Memphis, TN 38105-3678

*St. Jude Parents* is published on the first of each month by Patient Education and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.**

To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Alicia Huettel, RN, MSN, at 901-595-5453 ([parents\\_newsletter@stjude.org](mailto:parents_newsletter@stjude.org)) or Lois Young ([lois.young@stjude.org](mailto:lois.young@stjude.org)). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter, visit [www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter](http://www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter).

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