

## ***COVID-19 Important Information for Kidney Patients***

### ***What do I need to know?***

If you have kidney disease, you are at a higher risk of getting an infection. Chronic kidney disease or kidney failure can lead to a weaker immune system. The information in this hand out can help you manage the risk of COVID-19.

### ***What are the symptoms of COVID-19?***

- Cough
- Fever
- Runny Nose
- Sore Throat
- Weakness
- Headache

Severe symptoms may include:

- Shortness of breath
- Breathing difficulties

### ***I don't have any flu-like symptoms. Can I still come to appointments at my renal/dialysis unit?***

All renal/dialysis patients without symptoms should come to appointments unless your unit contacts you to make a change.

All **hemodialysis patients** need to continue to come for their dialysis treatment. The hospitals and units are putting many measures in place to ensure all hemodialysis patients are provided the safest care. Dialysis treatments are life-sustaining and coming to the hospital for regularly scheduled dialysis treatments in a carefully managed environment is the **SAFEST option** for hemodialysis patients. Patients who skip or miss dialysis treatments may get sick and require urgent care or emergency room care.

### ***If I have flu-like symptoms and have travelled out of province in the last 14 days, what should I do?***

1. Call Health Links-Info Santé 1-888-315-9257 or 204-788-8200. If you need urgent medical care, call 911. Make sure they know you are a dialysis patient.
2. Call your Renal Unit before you leave home for a dialysis treatment or clinic visit.

3. Do not come to the dialysis unit until you have talked to your dialysis unit. We will plan for your dialysis in a way that keeps you and others from being exposed to COVID-19.

If you have been tested for COVID-19 at another location, please phone and alert the dialysis unit BEFORE coming in for dialysis.

### ***How can I lower my risk of getting an infection?***

We want to keep you and your family safe. We also need to ensure that you have access to a safe place for your renal/dialysis care. No visitors are allowed in the unit and you may be asked questions, and asked to wash hands or use hand sanitizer, when you come for your appointment.

Call 1-888-315-9257 OR your renal/dialysis unit if you are **unwell** so that we can keep everyone as safe and healthy as possible.

Here are steps that you and your family can do to help lower the risk of infection:

- **Do not travel. The risk of exposure to COVID-19 during travel outside Manitoba continues to increase.**
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If you do not have soap, you can use alcohol hand sanitizer if your hands are not visibly dirty.
- Wash your hands:
  - Before, during and after making meals
  - Before eating
  - After using the toilet
  - When your hands are dirty
- When not attending renal/dialysis appointments, stay home as much as possible.
- Stay six feet (two meters) away from others when possible.
- Avoid groups of people.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Throw tissues you have used in the garbage and wash your hands right away.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Do not shake hands or give hugs.
- Clean (disinfect) surfaces such as phones, computer, tables, chairs, countertops, door knobs.
- Do not share items such as drinking glasses, spoons/forks or tooth brushes.

For more information on COVID-19 visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus>.