

COVID-19 & Kidney Disease: Standards for Healthy Living

Practice social distancing.

Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” is the act of keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. Social distancing is the best tool we have to avoid being exposed to COVID-19 and slowing its spread locally and across the world.



To practice social or physical distancing follow these steps:

- Stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) from other people
- Do not gather in groups
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

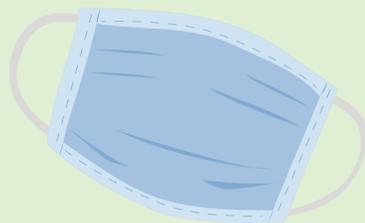
Use masks, or a face covering, and gloves.

Leaving home should be avoided. However, if you must leave home, wear a mask or cloth face covering when you go outside.

In the event of mask shortages, cloth or homemade masks can be worn (CDC Guidelines on how to make a homemade mask: <https://youtu.be/tPx1yqvJgf4>).

Disposable masks are recommended to wear on top of cloth/homemade face coverings, but if disposable masks are not available it is okay to use a cloth/homemade mask.

Disposable masks can be reused up to three times; as long as they do not have holes/rips/tears in them.



Wash your hands.

Proper handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick as germs can spread from other people or surfaces. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another as well as an entire community.



Key times to wash your hands include:

- Before, during, and after visiting hospitals/clinics for procedures, lab draws, doctor visits, etc.
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage
- After you have been in a public place and touched an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people, such as door handles, tables, gas pumps, shopping carts, or electronic cashier registers/screens, etc.
- Before touching your eyes, nose, or mouth because that's how germs enter our bodies.

Five steps for hand washing (per CDC guidelines):

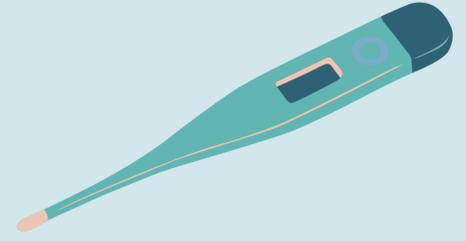
1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Note: You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available, though not all sanitizers are effective against all types of germs.



What to do if you feel like you are experiencing symptoms.

Symptoms may include: fever, cough, diarrhea, fatigue, or headache. If you develop a fever, it is important as a kidney patient to **ONLY** take acetaminophen (Tylenol). Other over-the-counter pain relievers (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naproxin, etc. are contraindicated for kidney patients). If you have any questions on what is or is not safe to take, please contact your transplant team!



Keep your home and surrounding areas clean.

It is important to keep your environment clean. Disinfecting the area with bleach, hydrogen peroxide, sanitizing wipes, etc. on frequently touched items (phones, deliveries, doorknobs, restroom surfaces, handrails, appliances, etc) is a good way to prevent exposure to germs. The EPA lists the best cleaners to use against COVID-19 here:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>



Seek support from your healthcare team.

To limit possible exposure, your health care team may be short-staffed or working from home. Please be patient with them and try to plan ahead if you are in need of their time and/or need to make an appointment.



Make sure you have at least 30 days of medicine on hand.

Continue to take all of your prescribed medication as directed! Unless otherwise directed by your care team, do not adjust any of your medications. They are an important part in keeping you healthy, especially during the COVID-19 outbreak.



Use telehealth to talk with your care team.

In-person appointments: These may need to be rescheduled using telehealth to protect the healthcare team, the patient, and family/caregivers.

Develop a plan to contact your care team in case of an emergency.

If you are eligible and active on the transplant waiting list, your status may be temporarily affected if you become ill.

Please reach out to your health care team with any concerns and/or questions.

