Flu & Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Important Information for Patients of *BC's Kidney Care Clinics*

Effective Date: March 23, 2020

To help keep everyone safe and provide you with the best care during influenza and coronavirus season, we are providing this handout to patients with kidney disease who attend one of BC's Kidney Care Clinics.

We want to reassure you that your care will continue. We're here to help and support you and to make sure that your care continues in the safest way possible. Please read this handout carefully. Also please make sure the clinic you visit has your current contact information.

In the weeks ahead, your clinic visit may be changed to a virtual visit rather than in-person – for example, it may be conducted by telephone or video link where available. Your blood testing schedule may also be changed or reduced temporarily. These things will ensure that you continue to have kidney care but that you are not exposed to crowded waiting rooms and other people who might be sick. Your nephrologist will determine if it's best to see you in-person and when blood testing is required.

When blood testing is required, book an appointment in advance. Arrive on time, not early for the appointment. If you arrive early, consider waiting in your car until your appointment time. This will help reduce your exposure to other people.

Continue with your usual medications. If you take Kayexalate (sodium polystyrene sulfonate), continue as ordered and keep your usual supply on hand. Do not stockpile.

What to do before you come to the clinic

If you are scheduled for an in-person visit, please call the clinic if you have any of these symptoms (Clinic phone #: _____)

- Fever
- Cough (new onset or worsening chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing / shortness of breath

If you have symptoms, you may be:

- Asked additional questions over the phone by a nurse and given instructions on what to do next
- Asked to postpone your appointment or provided the option of a virtual appointment

What to do when you get to the clinic

Always clean your hands before entering the clinic. Hand sanitizers are available in the patient waiting area. If you have symptoms of the flu or COVID-19, clinic staff will direct you as to next steps. 2.

Guidance on travel

You are strongly advised to cancel or postpone any non-essential travel, likely until September. Patients who have traveled outside BC and have an appointment in one of our clinics are advised to call the clinic prior to arrival.

For information on COVID-19

Phone lines:

- Call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse with HealthLink BC
- Call 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319) or text message at 604-630-0300 for non-medical information about COVID-19 such as information on social distancing

Websites:

- BC Centre for Disease Control:.
  - www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-(novel). See the tab “People with chronic conditions”
  - Hand hygiene. http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/hand-hygiene
- BC Renal:
  - www.bcrenalagency.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/novel-coronavirus-(covid-19)
  - See the link to the Handwashing Video
  - See the link to the COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool

Precautions in the unlikely event kidney care is not available

It’s always a good idea to be familiar with the steps you could take if treatment was temporarily unavailable, such as in the case of an earthquake or other natural disaster.

The BC Renal website has helpful information for kidney patients, including an emergency diet plan and information about medications.

Go to www.bcrenalagency.ca Health info Emergency Preparedness