



Emergency Preparedness During COVID-19

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, an emergency is defined as, “an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action.” Usually, when we think about preparing for an emergency, we think about weather-related issues such as hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, floods, etc. However, right now, we are in the middle of a public health emergency with a coronavirus known as Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

Regardless of what emergency you may experience, it is always a good idea to be prepared. Please consider the following six tips to stay safe and healthy now and during the COVID-19 emergency:

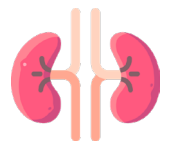
1. Continue your dialysis treatments as prescribed by your doctor.
2. Except for treatment days, try to stay home as much as possible to avoid being around people who are sick. Remember to wear a mask and practice social/physical distancing at treatment, in the lobby of the unit, and anytime you are in public.
3. Always remember to wash your hands often and keep hand sanitizer with you.
4. Limit the number of times you must leave your home to purchase groceries by:
 - Asking a family member/friend to deliver to you,
 - Using your local grocery store ordering and pick-up option, or
 - Using a grocery delivery service if available (examples: Shipt or Instacart).
5. Stock up on food, medications, and supplies to last a few weeks.
6. Stay social by checking in with friends, family members, and neighbors by calling, “Facetiming,” or sending handwritten cards to take care of your mental health.



Check out the Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) website to find resources on how to respond to any kind of emergency: www.kcercoalition.com.

Transplant—Is It the Right Choice for You?

The decision to get a kidney transplant is a personal one that involves gathering information from your doctor, your dialysis care team, transplant centers, family, and even others who have received a transplant. The more you learn, the better you can feel about your decision.



To be considered for a kidney transplant, a transplant center must evaluate and accept you. Each transplant center makes its own decision about whether to accept a person for transplant because they each have different rules. So, if one transplant center does not accept you, another might. Also, you are not automatically put on the waiting list for a transplant when you make your first visit to a transplant center. The transplant team will do medical tests to see if you are a candidate for transplant. Even if a transplant program does not accept you immediately for a transplant, it may reconsider you later if your condition improves. For example, if you lose weight as directed. So, be sure to ask if you can be reconsidered at another time.

Ask questions to help you make the right choice for you. The End Stage Renal Disease National Coordinating Center (ESRD NCC) has a flyer, *Why Transplant Is a Good Idea for Me!*, that addresses common questions and concerns when considering transplant. You can find it on their website at <https://esrdncc.org/globalassets/negpostransplantflyerfinal508.pdf>. Some transplant centers have made some changes to the way they schedule their appointments and testing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be sure to check with your dialysis team or social worker to assist you with planning for a transplant evaluation or appointment.

Are Vaccinations Really Important?

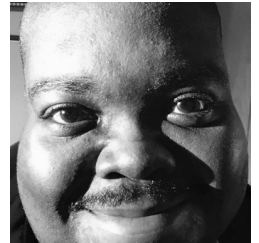
Vaccinations are extremely important for people with chronic kidney disease, especially if they are on dialysis or have been transplanted. Your immune system does not work like it did before your kidneys stopped working properly, so you are more likely to get pneumonia, hepatitis B, flu, and now COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance states, "Routine vaccination prevents illnesses that lead to unnecessary medical visits and hospitalizations." It is more important than ever to remind you that COVID-19 can affect your respiratory (breathing) system, so make sure you get your annual flu shot (coming up in September), and receive a pneumococcal vaccination (i.e., 13-Valent Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine [PCV13]) and/or the 23-Valent Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine [PPSV23]), as directed by your doctor to prevent pneumonia and its complications.

Your doctor's office or dialysis unit should be able to provide you with the vaccinations specifically recommended for people with kidney disease. If you would like to read more about vaccinations and their importance, the CDC created the document *Guidelines for Vaccinating Kidney Dialysis Patients and Patients with Chronic Kidney Disease*, located at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/downloads/dialysis-guide-2012.pdf>.

Source: CDC. Vaccination During a Pandemic. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html>. Accessed on July 10, 2020.

Patient Story by Anrico Wrenn

My relationship with dialysis began in the spring of 2012 when I became sick, and instead of going to the doctor, I kept putting it off. This resulted in me becoming extremely dehydrated and caused my kidneys to shut down. That day in the hospital was the worst day of my life. Hearing those words "You have to go on dialysis," I thought it was a death sentence. The only thing I knew about dialysis was what I had seen on TV and that was not good. My doctor, who became like a brother to me, explained everything and guided me through the process. My cousin, helped me see that even though my life was not what I had thought it would be, this was OK. She would tell me for now this is your "new normal," and that is OK.



Anrico Wrenn

With prayers and help from my family and friends, I began to realize this was not the end of my story, but another chapter that I am more than happy to embrace. I have been able to work, travel, and enjoy life. I decided that this was not going to define or limit me in any way and with proper planning it does not. My hope is to help guide other patients through the dialysis process and help them better prepare for what to expect from someone who has walked the same path they are on.

Feedback!

Let us know how we're doing:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/esrdptnewsletter>



If you have questions about how to voice a concern or grievance, check out this helpful tool created BY patients FOR patients: www.esrdnetworks.org/resources/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1. To file a grievance, please contact your network below:

Network 7: Florida

T: 800.826.3773
E: NW7info@hsag.com
www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork7
3000 Bayport Dr., Suite 300
Tampa, FL 33607

Network 13: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma

T: 800.472.8664
E: NW13info@hsag.com
www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork13
4200 Perimeter Center Dr., Suite 102
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Network 15: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming

T: 800.783.8818
E: NW15info@hsag.com
www.hsag.com/ESRDNetwork15
3025 S. Parker Rd., Suite 820
Aurora, CO 80014

Network 17: American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Northern California, Northern Mariana Islands

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E: NW17info@hsag.com
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