

Clean Hands Save Lives

It is okay to ask your healthcare providers if they have washed their hands. If you have not seen them wash, go ahead and ask them to do so. It does not matter whether they use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner. **Good hand hygiene is the best way to reduce infections in the dialysis center.**

Your healthcare team should always complete hand hygiene before:

- Touching you or any patient.
- Touching your vascular access.
- Touching a potentially unclean body site and then immediately touching another body site such as, touching a wound and then touching a dialysis catheter.
- Handling medication.
- Preparing food.

Your healthcare team should always complete hand hygiene after:

- Touching any patient.
- Contact with:
 - Body fluids.
 - Mucous membranes.
 - Broken skin.
 - Wound dressings.
 - Dialysate.
 - Medical equipment, such as the dialysis machine.
- Removal of gloves.

Your healthcare team is required to:

- Wear gloves when caring for you or touching any equipment at the dialysis station.
- Remove gloves and complete hand hygiene between each patient or station.
- Change gloves often during patient care.
- **Wash hands with soap and water when hands or gloves are visibly soiled.**



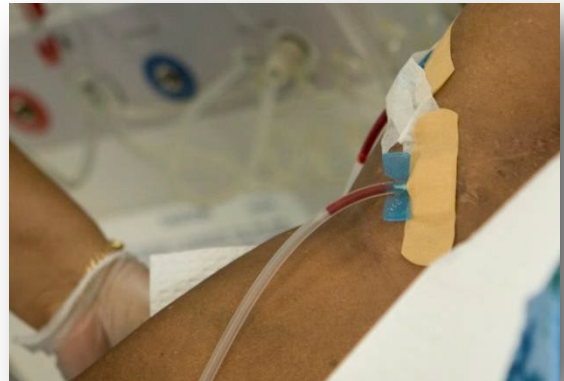
**Pay attention, and gently remind staff if you observe improper hand hygiene.
Remember, clean hands save lives!**

Infection Prevention

Understanding the Importance of Washing Your Hands and Keeping Your Vascular Access Site Clean

Here is why washing your hands and your access site right before going to your dialysis chair is so important:

- You are a kidney patient. Kidney patients are immunosuppressed. This means that you are at a high risk for getting an infection. Some infections are even resistant to antibiotics.
- Washing your hands often, especially before and after dialysis can reduce your chances of getting an infection.
- Vascular access infection is the most common infection in hemodialysis patients. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), infection is the second most common cause of death (15%).
- By washing your access, there is less risk of bacteria getting into your blood.



Knowing the Signs and Symptoms of Infection

It is important to know the signs of complication or infection. Call your doctor or nurse right away if you notice any:

- Bleeding from your vascular access site.
- Redness, swelling, soreness, pain, warmth, or drainage around the site.
- Fever over 100.5°F (38.0°C).
- Slowness in the pulse (thrill) in your graft or fistula; or you do not feel it at all.
- Swelling of the arm where your catheter is placed (if you have a catheter).
- Changes in your hand, such as it getting unusually cold, numb, or weak.

Sources: HSAG gratefully acknowledges the Northwest Renal Network (NW16) for the development of the content used in this resource. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Recommendations for Preventing Transmission of Infections Among Chronic Hemodialysis Patients. MMWR 2001; 50(5): 13.

<https://www.cdc.gov/dialysis-safety/media/pdfs/Dialysis-Patient-PocketGuide-P.pdf>
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000591.htm



Patient

Infection Prevention Campaign Pledge

My dialysis healthcare team has educated me on infection prevention practices.

I Pledge

to protect myself and others by doing the following:

- Perform frequent and good hand washing techniques.
- Wash my vascular access before treatment starts.
- Keep my catheter site dry and covered.
- Ask staff members to follow infection prevention practices.
- Immediately notify my healthcare team if I notice any signs or symptoms of complication or infection:
 - Bleeding from your vascular access site.
 - Redness, swelling, soreness, pain, warmth, or drainage around the site.
 - Fever over 100.5°F (38.0°C).
 - Slowness in the pulse (thrill) in your graft or fistula; or you do not feel it at all.
 - Swelling of the arm where your catheter is placed (if you have a catheter).
 - Changes in your hand, such as it getting unusually cold, numb, or weak.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If you have questions or need to file a grievance about the care you are receiving at your dialysis facility, contact your Network listed below.

- Network 7: Florida
T: 800.826.3773
- Network 13: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma
T: 800.472.8664
- Network 15: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
T: 800.783.8818
- Network 17: American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Northern California, Northern Mariana Islands
T: 800.232.3773
- Network 18: Southern California
T: 800.637.4767

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