

Dialysis Patients: Stay Healthy and Prevent Infections



Important Things to Remember

- Hands are the main source of germ transmission. Be sure to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often.
- Get your annual flu vaccine and any other vaccinations recommended to you by your health care provider.
- Knowing how to care for your access site at home is important. Avoid scratching or picking at site. Know how to bathe with a catheter to prevent infection.
- Regularly cleaning surfaces in your home can help prevent the spread of germs.
- Clean clothes and hand washing are also important to stay healthy at home.
- Avoid close contact with sick family members or visitors in your home if they are not feeling well.
- Seek care immediately at first signs and symptoms of an infection (redness, swelling, warmth, drainage, or pain).



Clean Hands Stay Safe

- Hand Hygiene Matters
- Wash your hands before and after each dialysis session.
- Use soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap/water aren't available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Ask staff if they have cleaned their hands before touching your access



Wound Care

If you have a wound:

- Keep it clean and covered.
- Change dressings as instructed by care team.
- Watch for signs of infection: redness, swelling, warmth, drainage or pain.

Call the clinic: If your wound looks worse, drainage has changed, or you get a fever.



Protect Your Access Device

- Clean hands stay safe
- Keep you access clean and covered between treatments.
- Avoid scratching or touching it unnecessarily.
- Don't get it wet (especially catheters or new fistulas)
- Report redness, swelling, warmth, or drainage to your nurse right away



Keep Your Skin Healthy

- Healthy Skin = First Line of Defense
- Moisturize daily to prevent cracks and dryness.
- Avoid scratching or picking at skin or scabs.
- Check your body for cuts, rashes, or sores-especially around your access arm.
- Tell staff about any new bumps, redness or pain



If You Have Diabetes:

Keep your blood sugars in target range

- Check your blood sugar as directed.
- Keep blood sugars in target range to help wounds heal.
- Check your feet daily for blisters, cuts, redness or sores.
- Wear clean, comfortable shoes; don't walk barefoot.
- Report any foot changes, numbness or slow-healing sores.



1 in 3

About one in three adults with diabetes (and one in five adults with high blood pressure) may have chronic kidney disease.