



**Heartland Kidney Network**

We're Here For You.

# MY TREATMENT: HOW CAN I STAY INFECTION FREE?



As a dialysis patient you have a higher risk of getting a healthcare-associated infection (HAI). Infections in the blood are the second leading cause of death among hemodialysis patients. It is important to learn what you can do to prevent infections. For example, hand washing is the number one thing you can do to prevent infections.

## WHY AM I AT RISK FOR INFECTION?

- Catheters and/or needles are used often to get into your bloodstream.
- Due to repeated hospitalizations and/or surgeries.
- Kidney disease lowers your ability to fight infection.

## SYMPTOMS OF INFECTION

- Fever
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Weakness
- Loss of appetite
- Pain

## SIGNS OF INFECTION

At the needle or catheter site:

- Skin is sore and tender to touch
- Skin is red
- Drainage from the site
- Swelling
- Skin is warm to the touch

## TIPS TO KEEP ME INFECTION FREE

- Wash your hands before and after dialysis.
  - Use soap and water
  - Scrub for at least two minutes
  - Dry them with a one-use towel if possible
- Make sure your care team and care partner/giver wash their hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after caring for you.
- If you notice you are having any signs or symptoms of infection, report it as soon as possible to your care team.

## KEEPING MY HEMODIALYSIS CATHETER INFECTION FREE

- Know the steps your care team takes to prepare to use your catheter for dialysis.
- Do not get your catheter wet.
- Do not pull or tug on the catheter.

For more information or to file a grievance please contact the Heartland Kidney Network at: Heartland Kidney Network • 7306 NW Tiffany Springs Pkwy. • Suite 230 • Kansas City, MO 64153

Toll-Free Patient Line: (800) 444-9965 • net12@nw12.esrd.net • www.heartlandkidney.org

End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) #12 Network Coordinating Council, Inc. dba Heartland Kidney Network. This resource was (created, developed, compiled, etc.) while under contract with Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Baltimore, Maryland. Contract #HHS-500-2013-NW012C. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy.

Continued to back.

## KEEPING MY FISTULA OR GRAFT INFECTION FREE

- Know the steps your care team takes to use your fistula or graft for dialysis.
- Wash your needle site before dialysis.
- Do not scratch or pick at your fistula or graft.
- Know what to do if you have any problem with your fistula or graft.
- Read “MY CHOICES: What I Should Know About Fistulas” for more on signs and symptoms of infection.

## KEEPING MY PERITONEAL DIALYSIS (PD) CATHETER INFECTION FREE

- Use soap and a clean washcloth to clean your catheter site every day.
- Check your catheter daily for signs of cracking, drainage, redness or swelling.
- Tape the catheter down to your skin to keep from tugging or pulling on it.
- Do not wear tight clothes or belts around your catheter.
- If you care team tells you to, keep a special dressing over the skin around your catheter.

## MY QUESTIONS

**Ask your Care Team:** Should I use anti-bacterial soap? Do I need to use any anti-bacterial medicine on my site? What is the clinic policy for infection control? What is PPE? Tell me more about peritonitis.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/dialysis>

For more information or to file a grievance please contact the Heartland Kidney Network at: Heartland Kidney Network • 7306 NW Tiffany Springs Pkwy. • Suite 230 • Kansas City, MO 64153

Toll-Free Patient Line: (800) 444-9965 • [net12@nw12.esrd.net](mailto:net12@nw12.esrd.net) • [www.heartlandkidney.org](http://www.heartlandkidney.org)

End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) #12 Network Coordinating Council, Inc. dba Heartland Kidney Network. This resource was (created, developed, compiled, etc.) while under contract with Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Baltimore, Maryland. Contract #HSM-500-2013-NW012C. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy.

March 2014