

Renal Care Program
About the Coronavirus (COVID-19)
March 2020

Hello,

As you already know, COVID-19 is a major threat to our health; we must all take appropriate preventive measures to reduce the risk of contamination.

We realize that a lot of information is being shared via various means (television, radio, social media, etc.). It can sometimes be difficult for you and your family to make sense of that information.

Although members of the healthcare team have already shared this information with you. We thought it would be a good idea to give you this copy for reference in connection with COVID-19 and your treatments.

What about your hemodialysis treatments?

Rest assured: your hemodialysis treatments are offered as usual. Avoid carpooling. If you must carpool, make sure to keep a certain distance between you and the other person. For instance, you could ride in the back seat alone with the driver being the only person sitting in the front.

If you are taking a taxi to get to your treatments, we suggest that you write down the taxi number. In the event that a situation requires tracking down those who have used a particular taxi, it will be easy to do. Just like the airlines do in these kinds of events.

Before your next treatment, if you have symptoms such as:

- Fever exceeding 38°C;
- New cough or worsening chronic cough;
- Respiratory problems;

AND/OR

- If you have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19;
- If you have been in direct contact with someone who travelled outside Canada in the 14 days following their return to the country;

Please call the unit and ask to speak with a nurse. She will ask you for more information about your symptoms, discuss your situation with the doctor and give you specific instructions. These measures are not there to make your life difficult. They're only in place to prevent infections. It is important to take the means necessary to reduce the risk of contamination **for you, your family, nursing staff, doctors and the general public.**

Upon arriving to the hospital, you probably noticed the presence of staff controlling who can or cannot enter inside the hospital. This is what we call pre-triage. Members of your family cannot stay in the waiting room during your treatments. They must go back home or return to their car.

Upon arriving on the unit, you must follow these instructions:

- Plan to arrive on the unit 10 minutes (not more) before your appointment time. Otherwise, we will ask you to go back to your car or home.
- Make sure to keep at least 2 metres (6 feet) between you and the other patients who are waiting for their appointments.
- Wash your hands with soap and water. If this is not possible, use hand sanitizer. Practise hand hygiene at all times... **not only during the pandemic!**
- We will assess your health condition a second time. If you show signs of COVID-19, we will take the necessary measures to reduce the risk of contamination before your treatment:
 - o You will need to wear a mask;
 - o We will need to place you in an isolation room;
 - o You will be evaluated by the doctor, who will be able to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19.

At the end of your treatment, you must follow these instructions:

- Wash your hands before leaving the unit.
- Bring your personal belongings (e.g. blanket) and wash them regularly.
- Go straight home. Since you already have a major health problem, we strongly recommend that you totally avoid places where people gather (grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants). Ask someone to run your errands for you.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What are coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses (microbes). They can cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People infected with COVID-19 can have little or no symptoms, as they are like those experienced with a cold or the flu. Symptoms can appear within 14 days following exposure to COVID-19.

Symptoms reported include:

- Fever exceeding 38°C;
- New cough or worsening chronic cough;
- Respiratory problems.

How does COVID-19 spread?

In humans, coronaviruses cause infections to the nose, throat and lungs. They are most commonly transmitted by an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets produced when coughing or sneezing;
- Direct personal contact, such as touch;
- Contact with an object that has the virus on it.

Is there a vaccine against COVID-19?

For the moment, there are no vaccines against COVID-19. If you were vaccinated against the flu (influenza), this vaccine doesn't protect you against COVID-19.

How can you protect yourself against COVID-19?

The following advice can help you reduce the risk of being infected and avoid spreading it:

- Practise social distancing; stay at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people.
- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Washing your hands is the best way to protect yourself and your family.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid any contact with sick people.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your arm or a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Then, wash your hands and throw your used tissues in the garbage.
- If you are sick, stay home. If this is the case, it is important for you to contact us before your next treatment. We will give you instructions to follow.
- If you don't have any symptoms, you don't need to wear a mask.

If members of your family, friends or neighbours have symptoms or are returning from a trip, especially a trip outside Canada, it is important that you **avoid** any contact with them for at least 14 days following the appearance of the symptoms and/ or their return to the country. Keeping in touch by phone is a lot safer than a short home visit.

Reminder: we strongly advise against non essential travels. Several dialysis centres in the country are refusing to see vacationers right now. This is what we are doing at this time to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Do not hesitate to share your questions and concerns with us. We're here for you. For more information, you can visit the following websites:

- Government of New Brunswick: www.gnb.ca
- Vitalité Health Network: www.vitalitenb.ca

Thank you for following our instructions. **Let's all be careful!**

To contact us:

Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre

Telephone: 506-869-2074

Hours of operation: Monday to Saturday, from 7 a.m. to midnight, including holidays

Satellite Unit – Telenephrology – Miramichi

Telephone: 506-624-5400

Hours of operation: Monday to Saturday, from 6:45 a.m. 6:45 p.m., including holidays

Edmundston Regional Hospital

Telephone: 506-739-2271

Hours of operation: Monday to Saturday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., including holidays

St. Joseph Community Health Centre in Dalhousie

Telephone: 506-684-7010

Hours of operation: Monday to Saturday, from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., including holidays

Chaleur Regional Hospital

Telephone: 506-544-2501

Hours of operation: Monday to Saturday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., including holidays

Tracadie Hospital

Telephone: 506-394-3232

Hours of operation: Monday to Saturday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., including holidays

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