

PANDEMIC FLU PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE AND THEIR FAMILIES



Experts predict that there is an extremely high chance that pandemic influenza will impact the United States. If you have chronic kidney disease, are on dialysis, or had a transplant, you have special needs that require you to start planning now. You should know what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and how you should protect yourself and your family. Your needs are different from those of the general population and this checklist can help you gather information and resources that can help you if there is a flu pandemic.

What is a Pandemic? A pandemic is an outbreak of an infectious disease that spreads through human populations across a large region (like an entire state or country) or even worldwide. Pandemic flu is a global outbreak of flu disease that occurs when a new type of influenza virus appears that people have not been exposed to before (or have not been exposed to in a long time). The virus spreads quickly from person to person. For the past ten years, scientists have been alerting government health departments to prepare for pandemics.

1. PLAN FOR A PANDEMIC

- Contact your local Public Health Department and ask about their pandemic plan. This plan outlines which hospital you should go to, if needed, and what plans have been made for public transportation.
- Contact your dialysis unit and ask about their pandemic plan. Ask what you should do if you start to have symptoms of pandemic influenza (should you go to the dialysis unit, a hospital, or stay home and wait for instructions?) and what ideas they can give you about transportation for dialysis if there is no public transportation available.
- Make sure your dialysis facility has your current address and phone number in case they need to contact you.
- Make plans for back-up transportation with family members, friends, neighbors or church members.
- Make sure that you receive influenza vaccinations yearly and pneumococcal vaccinations, as recommended.
- Store a two- week supply of water and food. During a pandemic you may be unable to get to a store, or the stores could be out of supplies. Your supply kit can be used for other types of emergencies, such as power outages or severe weather disasters.
- Review the emergency diet with your dietitian including any diet changes to make if you would be homebound for a short time or get less dialysis than you normally do.



- ❑ Check your regular prescription drugs to make sure you have at least a 2-week supply at home. If you are able, stockpile your prescriptions.
- ❑ Have nonprescription drugs and other health supplies at home, including pain relievers, first aid kits, cough/cold medicine, and other medications as recommended by your health care team.
- ❑ Talk to your dialysis unit and your family members about what to do if your loved ones get sick.
- ❑ Have medical histories available for you and for all family members for emergency situations.
- ❑ Get involved in your community's pandemic preparedness planning. Dialysis patients are one of the most vulnerable populations in your community and need special arrangements. Write or call your local officials and tell them that dialysis patients need to be represented in the community's plans.
- ❑ If you are a home dialysis patient, work with your dialysis unit or your supplier to make sure that you will continue to have your supplies delivered. Find out if it is possible to stockpile supplies if a pandemic threatens your area.
- ❑ Keep all emergency contact phone numbers up-to-date and easy to find, including those for power and water companies. Find out what you need to do if there is a "Boil Water" alert for your area.
- ❑ If you are a transplant patient, contact your transplant facility to determine any extra precautions that you should take.

2. LIMIT THE SPREAD OF GERMS AND PREVENT INFECTION

- ❑ Wash your hands frequently with soap and water and teach your children and other family members to do the same.
- ❑ Remind family members, especially children, to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or to cough into their arms (not their hands). Consider carrying plastic baggies to hold tissues until you can dispose of them.
- ❑ Remind family members, especially children, to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Again, talk to your dialysis unit about what you should do if a family member becomes sick.
- ❑ Ask your dialysis unit about the proper and most effective way to use surgical masks. Determine which masks you should use, when you should use them and how to use them.

- Ask your dialysis unit if you should use any other types of personal protective equipment (PPE), what is available and what is affordable for dialysis patients.
- Learn all the facts about Tamiflu. Ask your doctor if it is effective and if you should have some available.
- Wash or spray the telephone with disinfectant daily and keep keyboards (a major source of germs at school and offices) and other electronic equipment clean.
- Keep your nose clear. Your nose is the first line of defense against inhaled viruses. Keep nasal passages clean so they can work their best.
- Keep cuts, scrapes and wounds clean.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating.

3. ITEMS TO HAVE FOR AN EXTENDED STAY AT HOME

HINT: Regularly check expiration dates on food items to make sure your supply is always fresh.

Examples of Food and non-perishables (for the renal diet)

- Packages of dry milk or cans of evaporated milk
- 2 or 3 gallons of distilled or bottled water
- Packages of powdered fruit-flavored drink mix or pre-mixed fruit flavored drink
- Cans or boxes of fruit juice (cranberry, apple or grape)
- Several boxes of cereal – NO raisin bran
- Small cans of fruit – 12 – 18 (pears, peaches, oranges, mixed fruit, applesauce)
- Cans of low sodium vegetables (carrots, green beans, peas, corn or wax beans)
- Cans of low sodium meat (tuna, crab, chicken, salmon or turkey)
- Jars of peanut butter
- Jars of jelly or honey
- Jars of Mayonnaise (or several single-serve foil wrapped packs)
- Bread (Bread can be kept frozen for 3 months)
- Box of vanilla wafers or graham crackers
- Hard candy
- Marshmallows
- Other non-perishable foods
- If you have a baby – canned or jarred baby food and formula
- If you have a pet- stock up on pet food

Examples of Medical, Health and Emergency supplies

- Measuring cups, teaspoons, tablespoons for renal diet
- Plastic knives, spoons, forks in case of water problems
- Napkins, paper plates, plastic bowls and cups
- Paper towels
- Manual can opener
- Soap and water or alcohol based (60-95%) hand wash
- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Portable radio
- Batteries
- Flashlight
- Baby wipes/hand sanitizer
- Plastic jug for storing water
- Scissors
- Garbage bags
- Bottle of household chlorine bleach/cleansing agents
- Blood pressure cuff (if possible)
- Surgical masks
- Sharp knife
- Extra pair of glasses
- Sterile gloves
- First Aid Kit and manual
- Cash and Coins
- Photocopies of identification and credit cards
- Photocopies of dialysis information
- Contact lens solutions and hearing aid batteries
- Items for infants such as diapers, bottles, formula and pacifiers
- A map of local area including local transit systems
- Seasonal items such as umbrellas, mittens, blankets, shovel, windshield scraper, etc.

