

Advice for remaining healthy while waiting for a kidney transplant

Points to Remember

Waiting for a kidney can be a long and frustrating time but there are some things you can do to help yourself stay as healthy and as fit as possible for when the offer does come

Clinic Reviews

Patients who are 'active' on the transplant waiting list need to be seen in our specialist clinic at least every 6 months. This is to check you remain fit for transplantation and to order any important tests. This is also a good chance to discuss any worries or new medical problems you may have had since your last appointment and update you on new developments.

Red Cross blood samples

Patients on the waiting list need to send regular blood samples (every 2 months) to the Red Cross so they can be 'matched' with a donor kidney when it becomes available.

Home Dialysis Services will send blood slips to their patients so they can have the blood taken at their local pathology collection centre with regular blood tests. If you are dialysing at a satellite centre, the staff will collect your samples for you.

Blood transfusions

It is preferable to avoid blood transfusions because sometimes they cause changes in your blood that make it harder to find a well matched kidney (antibodies). Of course, there are times when blood transfusions are absolutely necessary. **If you receive a blood transfusion, it is important to let your renal doctor or transplant coordinator know.**

Smoking and drug use

Smoking increases the risk of lung infections, lung cancer and the risk of strokes and heart attacks. It can also delay your recovery from surgery and wound healing. We recommend that patients do not smoke or use other addictive drugs. This is because kidney transplants do not last as long in people who smoke.

Weight

Controlling your body weight and avoiding fluid weight gaining too much fluid weight between dialysis treatments are important, especially for your heart. Being overweight can make surgery very difficult and increase the possibility of complications and failure of the transplant.

Exercise

Regular exercise improves your body's recovery after surgery. Blood pressure control, mood and general well being are also improved with regular exercise. For example, 15 -30 minutes of walking 3-4 times per week or more if you can.

Dental Care

Regular dental checks are essential, as the risk of mouth infections after kidney transplantation is higher if your teeth and gums are in poor condition.

Protection of skin against sunlight

Protect your skin by wearing a hat, long sleeves and using sunscreen and try to avoid the sun in the middle of the day.

This is particularly important for people who have pale skin and will help prevent skin cancer after a transplant. If you notice any changes to your skin, please report these to your doctor.

Vaccinations & Cancer Screening tests

It is wise to keep in touch with your local doctor (GP); they will keep you up to date with the normal vaccinations, like the yearly flu vaccine or the pneumonia vaccine as well as other routine checks. e.g. – the regular pap smears and mammograms that are recommended for women every 2 years.

Medications

You should take all your prescribed medications. If you have issues with your medications, discuss these with your kidney specialist or the dialysis team.

Ambulance cover

We recommend that all patients with chronic kidney disease have current ambulance cover

Your contact details

Please check with us before you leave your clinic review, that your contact details (**especially your mobile phone number**) are up to date so we are able to contact you should you be offered a kidney

Contact

Practitioner / Patient notes

Transplant Coordinator

9342 3133

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