From the Medical Director’s Desk: Dr. Lok

I will continue the (10) Tips to help you stay well on dialysis. In the last newsletter I explained tips for “how to stay positive and go with the flow.” Here’s a bit on Tip #2:

“TOP 10” tips to help you stay well as a dialysis patient

1. Stay positive and “go with the flow”
   Smile – it will help keep you and others warm!

2. Be around supportive family and friends – keep in contact
   For many people on dialysis, it has become “part of my life” – part of the daily routine. Some view it very positively, i.e. dialysis as an important way to help them stay feeling well. However, for others, it can be felt to be an intrusion in their lives, cumbersome, scary and can even cause anxiety. Everyone views dialysis and responds to it differently. People have different attitudes, support systems and coping mechanisms. We don’t ever want you to feel alone. We understand that some people have a lot of friends and family and some people are “all by myself”… but you are never alone. Being at dialysis is an opportunity to make friends (if you want) and the staff is here to lend a helping hand. Some people are shy and don’t want to tell people outside of the unit that they are on dialysis – however, many are surprised by how supportive your community can be! Don’t be shy to share with others that you’re on dialysis! Be involved in community activities where you can meet new people – asks your doctor, nurse or social worker for suggestions – World Kidney Day is March 8 2018 – help raise awareness of kidney disease… don’t be shy to give support or get support!

3. Don’t miss your dialysis treatments and stay for the prescribed length of time
4. Be mindful of what you eat and stay properly nourished
   Especially avoid foods high in potassium
5. **Be mindful of what you drink**
   The less weight gained between dialysis usually means the less “extra fluid” you need removed – and that’s better for you and your heart

6. **Get regular physical exercise and stay fit**
   It’s good for your heart, muscles and bones

7. **Be involved in your care – know your blood pressure and your bloodwork**

8. **Take care of your vascular access**
   It’s your lifeline

9. **Regularly re-evaluate your goals**
   This includes your personal, professional and dialysis goals

10. **Get to know the healthcare team and other people on dialysis**
    We’re your dialysis family. The healthcare team is here to support you.

Until next time, stay away from the germs (wash your hands)!!

**Medical Director: Dr. Charmaine Lok**

**Program Safety Practices**

For your safety, please remember that you must bring your Health Cards with you **every time** you come for dialysis treatment. This is mandatory instruction from the Ministry of Health. After you show your Health Card to the ward clerk, a bracelet with your name will be placed on your wrist and you will wait in the lobby until you are asked to enter the unit. If you are a first shift patient, the number 1, 2 or 3 on your bracelet will indicate what order you will be called in the unit.

Please do not draw the curtain around your station or cover your head during your dialysis treatment. The nurses always need to be able to see you in case you need immediate help. You can draw the curtains when you are going on and off the machines.

If you need to see the doctor during dialysis, please tell your nurse and the reason you want to see the doctor. This will improve communication and ensure you receive the care you might need.

**Purchasing Food Items**

It is preferable to eat your meals at home or prior to starting dialysis. If you choose to purchase food at the hospital, it is your responsibility to obtain it on your own. Please do not ask staff or family member of other patients to purchase your food or drink.
Hand Hygiene

We urge all of you to wash your hands before entering and leaving the dialysis units.

As being part of our hemodialysis unit, you take part in our good hand hygiene program. This program includes hand washing to kill germs while keeping the good skin healthy. We need your help to do your part- even though healthcare workers wash their hands; the spreading of germs continues to be a problem. This is why we need you ALL to help by washing your hands as you enter and leave the dialysis units.

World Kidney Day: Thursday, March 8, 2018

World Kidney Day is a yearly global awareness campaign aimed at raising awareness of the importance of our kidneys. Celebrating the day creates awareness about preventive behaviors, risk factors, and awareness about how to live with kidney disease and encourage transplantation when possible. This year, the campaign is focusing on raising awareness on kidneys and women’s health as the World Kidney Day and the International Women’s Day coincide and are commemorated on the same day, March 8. Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) affects approximately 195 million women worldwide and it is currently the 8th leading cause of death in women, with close to 600,000 deaths each year. Celebrating the two occasions on the same day offers us the opportunity to reflect on the importance of women’s health and specifically their kidney health. Please join us in celebrating World Kidney Day at our booth. Lots of activities & prizes to be won including a raffle draw. We look forward to seeing you there.

Where: Eaton entrance at Toronto General Hospital

Time: 8 am to 2 pm.
Patient and Family Advisory Council

The Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFSAC) will be meeting third Wednesdays every other month. Our next meeting is on March 21, 2018 between 12:00-1 pm. The purpose of the council is for you and your family to have a say in matters relating to the hemodialysis unit. We encourage anyone who is interested to join the council. It is a great way to get your voice heard about ways to enhance the dialysis unit and also share ideas about social events we can all participate in outside of the dialysis unit. We invite you to ask questions and share your comment with us by contacting Alicia Jones, Patient Care Co-ordinator at alicia.jones@uhn.ca or 416-340-4800 ext. 8502 or Melissa Rubin, Social Worker at melissa.rubin@uhn.ca or 4163404800 ext. 6047.

Nutrition Ideas: Ten Tips for Food Safety

When food is eaten that has not been properly cooked, cleaned, or stored, bacteria can grow and make you sick. Getting sick from the bacteria in your food is called food poisoning or foodborne illness.

It is important to know how to handle and cook your food safely. This can help you avoid food poisoning. According to Health Canada, more than 4 million Canadians get food poisoning every year!

Here are some simple tips to help keep you safe:

1. Wash your hands using warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after doing the following:
   - touching raw meat, poultry, fish or seafood
   - eating
   - going to the bathroom
   - playing with pets

2. Wash any surfaces that come into contact with food such as countertops and cutting boards.

3. Wash fresh fruit and vegetables under running water. Do not leave them soaking in your sink as bacteria can get onto your food.

4. Keep your fridge at 4 °C (40°F) and your freezer at -18°C (0°F) to help prevent bacteria from growing on your food.
5. Don’t let raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood sit outside the fridge for more than 2 hours. Put it in the fridge as soon as possible.

6. Store raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood in the fridge in sealed containers on the bottom shelf to avoid the juices from dripping on other food. Keep raw foods like meat separate from other foods such as fruit and vegetables.

7. Freeze raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood if you do not plan to use it within two to three days of buying it.

8. Defrost frozen raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood by placing it in the fridge, under cold running water, or in the microwave. Do not leave it out on your countertop at room temperature.

9. Use a food thermometer to make sure food is cooked properly. Checking the colour of your food does not always tell you if it is safe to eat. Go to https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/general-food-safety-tips/safe-internal-cooking-temperatures.html for a list of safe cooking temperatures of food or ask your Registered Dietitian for a paper copy to keep at home.

10. Store leftovers in the fridge or freezer within two hours of cooking. Do not reheat leftovers more than once.

11. Check the “best before” date on your food to make sure it is not expired.

Speak with your Registered Dietitian if you have any questions about food safety.

Hemodialysis Project: Introducing Advance care Planning

What is ACP?
ACP is the process of a capable person taking steps to ensure that their wishes guide their treatment and care in the event that they become incapable and/or unable to communicate these preferences in the future.

During this process, a capable person may express:

- **Who they trust** to act on behalf of their wishes and make healthcare decisions in their best interests if they are not capable of doing so themselves. These designated persons are indicated as a **Power of Attorney (POA)** and become the patient’s **Substitute Decision Maker (SDM)**.

- **The values and preferences** that should guide future decisions about their care in the event they are incapable of making treatment decisions. Planning in advance of a treatment or plan of treatment being proposed is documented in an Advance Directive or Living Will. Advance Directives inform and guide the patient’s SDM in their role of acting on the patient’s previously expressed wishes that are applicable to the patient’s circumstances.

The Ontario Power of Attorney Kit will soon be provided to patients who wish to identify and document their wishes and POA.

- Consider what is important to you;
- Create a summary of your wishes, values and beliefs;
- Have conversations with your potential future Substitute Decision Maker(s), health care professionals, and others.

For more information, please speak to your primary nurse and/or nephrologist.

**New Staff & Satellite Hemodialysis Program**

- Several new Nurses have started in our program since December 2017. Please welcome Priya Shelly-Ann, Sandy, Shugri and Kelly, You will see them around in the dialysis unit working independently. We are also pleased to welcome a new batch of nurses, Juliana, Kelsang, Maria and Indira. They are being trained and supervised by our senior nurses.
• Some of the new nurses hired are being trained for the new Bickle Dialysis Unit so they will only be here for training and mentoring.

• The Bickle HD unit will be a new 12 station Nocturnal Dialysis Unit for our older rehab patients. The unit is scheduled to open at our Toronto Rehab Bickle Center (at Dufferin St. & King St.) in the near future.

Narcotics

If you regularly use narcotics pain medications to manage a documented diagnosed medical problem, only your primary nephrologist will be prescribing these narcotic medications. If you are running out of narcotic medication and need a prescription, only your primary nephrologist can refill your prescription during weekdays, or if not available you can ask your family doctor. No narcotic prescriptions will be refilled during the weekend, by trained kidney doctors (fellows) or other staff nephrologist.

For NEW patients to our program, where there is no documentation for the valid medical reason for narcotic use, you should seek advice from your family doctor. If you do not have a family doctor, your primary nephrologist can refer you to the Toronto General Hospital (TGH) pain service clinic.

Managing patients with suspect/confirmed bedbugs.

Over the past few months we have observed a few patients with bedbugs. When there is a patient with suspect/confirmed bedbugs, we follow the Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) safety guidelines:

• Patient with bedbugs do not require contact precautions
• Patient does not require a single room.
• According to IPCA bedbugs are not communicable and there is no evidence that bedbugs can transmit diseases.
• To alleviate any residual concerns for best practices we would:
  o Double-bagged the patient’s belongings in a labelled bag.
  o When possible we try and place the patient in an isolation room for dialysis treatment
• Housekeeping is well trained to handle this and will ensure that the room is appropriately cleaned.

If there are any questions/concerns, please do not hesitate to speak with your nurse or someone in management.