

**AN UPDATE ON
COVID-19 FOR
KIDNEY PATIENTS**

KIDNEY &

UROLOGY

FOUNDATION *of* AMERICA

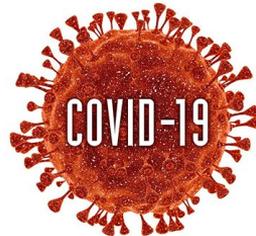
FROM THE DESK OF:

Sam Giarrusso, President

Kidney & Urology Foundation of America

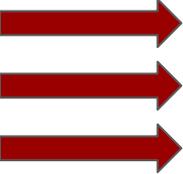
Are you aware of the effects that Covid-19 has on the kidney?

Most of us are not. Many doctors at the outset of the Covid-19 epidemic were also unaware. More and more evidence is emerging from anecdotal studies and research from New York City and other hospitals nationwide that the novel coronavirus attacks and severely damages the kidneys. Researchers looked at 4,000 patients at a major New York City health system from February 24-May 30, 2020 and found that nearly 50% of Covid-19 patients developed acute kidney injury – which is when the kidneys fail to filter waste. Of those, 17% required dialysis. These numbers, that doctors saw months ago in New York, are playing out nationwide. The result is a staggering demand which will last long after the pandemic passes. In fact, Covid patients with NO prior history of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) show signs of acute kidney injury which may leave them at higher risk for CKD.

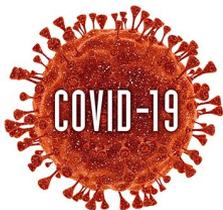


According to the Centers for Disease Control, people at **any stage** of CKD are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. The best way to **prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus**. Limit your interactions with other people as much as possible and take **precautions to prevent getting** COVID-19 when you do interact with others. Be sure to monitor your health for any symptoms, like a fever.

KUFA Trustee, David J. Cohen, MD, the Daniel Midler-John A Catsimatidis Professor of Nephrology, Medical Director, Kidney and Pancreas Transplantation, Columbia University Medical Center/New York Presbyterian Hospital advises **COVID-19 spreads mainly from person-to-person through the air - from coughing, sneezing, even talking; but also by touching. He recommends the following protocols:**

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1. Avoid close contact (stay six feet away “social distancing”)
 2. Wear a surgical or cloth mask that covers your mouth and nose at all times when around others;
 3. Wash or sanitize your hands after you touch any object or surface touched by others, and clean any surfaces often that may have been touched by others.

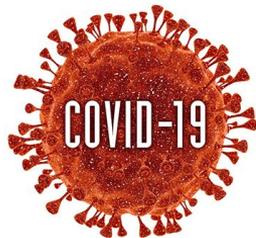
Please, if you are on dialysis and feel sick or have concerns, contact your dialysis clinic and your healthcare provider. DO NOT miss your treatments but plan to have enough food on hand to follow the [KCER 3-Day Emergency Diet](#) **in case you are unable to maintain your normal treatment schedule.**



And what is the effect of Covid-19 on the pediatric population, long thought to be 'immune' from the ravages of Covid-19?

PMIS – Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome – what is this? According to KUFA Executive Committee Member, Frederick Kaskel, MD, PhD, Chief Emeritus Nephrology, Professor of Pediatrics, Children's Hospital at Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York:

An unexpected occurrence of COVID-19 infection in the pediatric age group is the appearance of a new syndrome, the Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome. Presentation with fever, gastrointestinal, dermatologic, mucocutaneous and respiratory features heralded this new multisystem organ involvement with the majority at risk for cardiovascular complications. Similar to what has been found in the adult population with COVID-19 infections, pediatric minority populations are particularly targeted with previously healthy children. Of note is the fact that 80% of subjects required intensive care with one third having acute kidney injury and a small number having fatalities. Several treatment options are in trials at present in the New York/New Jersey region. Unknown are the long-term risk effects of COVID-19 in children as well as in adults.



What about transplant patients?

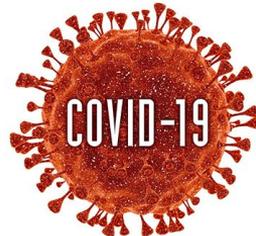
Transplant patients have been affected as well. Physicians at a Montefiore Medical Center - an epicenter for hospital admissions due to the novel coronavirus – wrote in a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine that: “Kidney-transplant recipients appear to be at particularly high risk for critical Covid-19 illness due to chronic immunosuppression and coexisting conditions.”¹.

Getting ready for a kidney transplant?

Is it safe to go to the hospital for appointments?

Healthcare facilities, including transplant centers, have put a lot of effort into keeping patients safe from COVID-19. A few examples of this include isolating patients with or suspected to have COVID-19 as well as limiting routine doctor and laboratory visits. Most centers are conducting telemedicine clinic visits to maintain safety. Please contact your transplant team for further information on these efforts.

[Getting ready for a kidney transplant during Covid-19?](#)



What is the risk of acquiring Covid-19 from organ donation?

The risk of acquiring COVID-19 from organ donation is unknown at this time but thought to be low. Organ procurement organizations are screening all potential donors for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure history. Most potential donors are tested for COVID-19. The majority of transplant centers have also taken careful steps to screen living donors, including checking for symptoms, exposures and even viral testing. At some centers, living donors are being asked to not travel to high-risk areas and to isolate themselves before donation and monitor for symptoms.

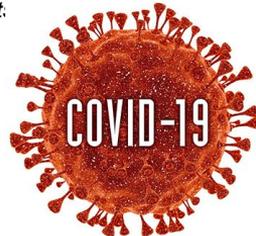
These are difficult times for all of us and especially for dialysis patients.

[There are ways to empower yourself to cope with Covid-19.](#)

Report by: Carol Brower, KUFA Program Director

1. Alberici F, Delbarba E, Manenti C, et al. A single center observational study of the clinical characteristics and short-term outcome of 20 kidney transplant patient. SARS-CoV2pneumonia. *Kidney Int* 2020 April 9 (Epub ahead of print).

Attributions: ESRD NCC (ESRD NCC works with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and other agencies to ensure the safety and continued treatment of dialysis patients and transplant recipients in the United States)





*From the Desk of Sam Giarrusso, President
Kidney & Urology Foundation of America*

I hope you found this report helpful. Like all non-profits, KUFA is facing financial hardship during the Covid lockdown and restrictions. Many of our events were cancelled and charitable funds are stretched. Your support would be greatly appreciated. Please consider making a gift on-line or contact us at: 732-866-4444. A gift card is below. Donations can be mailed to our Freehold business address below.

Thank you and be safe!

Sam

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