

## Social Distancing Handout for Hemodialysis Patients

Effective March 19, 2020

### What is social distancing?

Social distancing is limiting close contact with others to help slow the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Even when we are not sick, we should still keep about two meters (six feet) or the length of a queen-sized bed from one another, where possible, when outside our homes.

### What can we do in the dialysis unit to promote social distancing?

- Keep your distance from others while waiting for treatments and transportation:
  - **Maintain a distance of 2 metres (6 feet) or more, where possible**, between yourself and others, and at least 1 metre (3 feet) when 2 metres isn't possible.
- **Arrive on time, not early** for your dialysis treatments:
  - If you arrive early for your dialysis treatment, consider waiting in your vehicle or elsewhere on the hospital grounds where you can be greater than 2 metres away from other persons.
- You may be asked to wait in the back waiting area to avoid congestion in the main dialysis waiting area.
- You may be asked to come to dialysis at an alternate time if you are sick or have had contact with someone who is sick to avoid contact with other patients in the waiting room.
- We have restricted visitors in the dialysis unit to only those that are necessary to your care.
- Avoid physical greetings (handshakes, hugs) with others.

### What else can I do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 or other infections?

- Wash your hands!
  - Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. You will be asked to do this when entering the hemodialysis unit.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth:
  - Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
- Practice respiratory hygiene:

- Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
- Practice social distancing outside of the dialysis unit:
  - Avoid public transportation if possible, during this time.
  - Maintain social distance where possible when using assisted transportation services such as HandyDART.
  - Avoid shared transportation methods if you are sick. If you must use HandyDART and have a cough, please wear a mask and wash your hands before and after transport.