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Message from the Chair of the Renal Patient & Family Advisory Council

Council members recently completed a series of patient visits in the London area hemodialysis units to talk with patients and family members and get a sense of how they were feeling about their kidney care. The issue most frequently raised by patients was Para-transit operation. Council has now arranged to meet with an official of the London Transit Commission Para-transit service to discuss and seek solutions to the issues you raised.

Your newsletter contains a survey to help Council decide if patient interest exists for a patient education event in London. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. Best wishes and keep well.

Submitted by Fred McInnis, Renal PFAC Chair

Message from the Renal PFAC Resource Centre Task Team

We are pleased to say that our first resource centres have gone up in the patient waiting rooms at the Kidney Care Centre, as well as the University Hospital Dialysis unit and the Adam Linton Dialysis Unit at Victoria Hospital. We are envisioning a resource centre as a central point for patient related information. The resource

centre will evolve based on what patients think are important to them and how best to meet the needs of our patients. We will have feedback forms available at each centre so we would value your feedback on what you need as a patient! Submitted by Philip Varughese

8 Golden Rules for Protecting Your Kidneys

- * **Keep Fit and Active**
- * **Keep regular control of your blood sugar levels**
- * **Monitor your blood pressure**
- * **Eat healthy and keep your weight in check**
- * **Maintain a healthy fluid intake**
- * **Don't smoke**
- * **Do not take over the counter medications such as ibuprofen on a regular basis**
- * **Get your kidney function checked if you have one or more of the high risk factors such as: diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, family history of kidney disease, or African, Asian or Aboriginal origin**

Source: <http://www.worldkidneyday.org/faqs/take-care-of-your-kidneys/8-golden-rules/>

Vaccines!!

In our last edition of the newsletter, we asked JulieAnn Lawrence, a Nurse Practitioner in the Renal Program about the flu shot and other suggested vaccines for patients with kidney disease. In this edition JulieAnn shared some information about shingles.

Shingles Vaccines

Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is an infection that can be very serious. The virus causes a painful skin rash with blisters on one side of the body, often in a strip. In its most severe form it can cause complications like loss of vision and debilitating nerve pain. Shingles is caused by the reactivation of the varicella zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox. The most common complication is prolonged and severe pain where the shingles rash was. This is known as post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN) and there is no treatment or cure for it. As individuals get older, they are more likely to develop PHN and the pain is likely to be more severe. Shingles may also lead to serious complications involving the eye. Very rarely, shingles can lead to pneumonia, hearing problems, blindness, brain inflammation (encephalitis) or death.

Shingles cannot be passed from one person to another. For example, you cannot get shingles from being exposed to someone with shingles, nor can you get shingles if someone who has it coughs or sneezes on you. However, the virus that causes shingles can be spread from a person with shingles rash in the blister phase to another person who has never had chickenpox. The virus is spread through direct contact with the fluid in the blisters. In such cases, the person exposed to the virus might develop chickenpox, but they would not

develop shingles. Once the rash has developed crusts, the infected person is no longer contagious.

Who is at risk of getting shingles?

The risk of shingles increases as individuals get older. In fact, about one in three Canadians will develop shingles in their lifetime and two out of three cases occur in individuals over 50 years of age. The severity of shingles and its complications increase with age. Individuals with weakened immune system are also at greater risk of getting shingles. People who develop shingles usually only have one episode in their lifetime, but it is possible to have recurring episodes.

The shingles vaccine can reduce your risk of getting shingles and the long-term pain it can cause.

Is it safe for Kidney Patients to receive the vaccine?

Kidney patients can receive the vaccine however should do so in consultation with your physician or nurse practitioner. There are some instances when you should not receive the vaccine which include those on immunosuppression therapy, or if you already have shingles. If you've recently had shingles, you should wait at least one year before receiving the vaccine.

Is the shingles vaccine safe and effective?

Studies have shown that the vaccine reduced the risk of shingles by 51.3% and the risk of post-herpetic neuralgia (the most frequent complication of shingles) by 66.5%. The vaccine's effectiveness decreases considerably after 70 years of age.

If you are interested in receiving the shingles vaccine ask your doctor or nurse practitioner for more information.



Interview with a Nurse Practitioner in the Renal Program

Tell us about your background and experience as a Nurse Practitioner. What kind of training did you receive to become an NP?

Thank you for your interest in the Nurse Practitioner role in the renal program and the opportunity to tell you more about the role. NPs at LHSC are all nurses who have a graduate degree (Master's or PhD) with an additional 2 years at university for the NP. We are officially registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario as Registered Nurses (RN) in the Extended Class. This is why you will see us use the designation RN(EC) on prescriptions that we write. I received my nursing degree from Ryerson; my Master's from the University of Toronto; my NP from Western University and my PhD from the University of Alberta. Once we graduate our learning continues in the areas that we choose to work in.

Outline briefly, the role of the Nurse Practitioner in the renal program and how that role fits in the care of renal patients.

There are six NPs in the renal program; two at University Hospital, three at

Victoria Hospital and one at Westmount Hemodialysis Unit. We also work in the region and each of us has a satellite hemodialysis unit that we work in partnership with the nephrologist to manage the care issues. As NPs we are regulated health professionals and can perform duties that traditionally only doctors could do. For example, as NPs we can prescribe you some medications, diagnose some of your problems, order some tests and interpret the results. This includes making changes to the dialysis prescription. We work collaboratively with the nephrologists to manage patient care in the dialysis units. People on dialysis require a fair amount of medical help and the NP role is a good fit with that need. LHSC has had NPs in nephrology for approximately 25 years and we were/are considered leaders in this area.

Today, there are many NPs in nephrology across Canada. Working with patients on dialysis is the largest component of our role at LHSC but we also do some teaching at the university, research and participate on various committees and projects in the renal program and external committees.

Based on your experience, give some examples of what patients can do to self manage their illness.

People on hemodialysis spend most of their life outside of the dialysis unit and therefore what they do away from dialysis to manage their health is important. There are some obvious ways that patients can self manage their renal disease such as: attending dialysis on a regular basis, taking medications as prescribed, following the renal diet and living with the fluid limitations. Learning more about aspects of their treatment such as medications is important. Set small goals in order to achieve them.

Ask your nurse if you have any questions about your health. If they don't know they will find you the correct team member who can help you. Also it is important to also have a family doctor or NP in the community who can help you with non-dialysis aspects of your health. Try and stay as active as possible.

Can you discuss the importance of person centred care (including the patient and their family as a partner) in a dialysis unit, and the role the NP takes?

Person centred care is essential in hemodialysis. Many of these issues are complex and we need to work in a partnership to find what works for each individual and how we can help them. NPs value person centred care and our aim when we are rounding on a regular basis in the hemodialysis units, is to discuss care issues and come up with a plan together with patients and their families.

Thanks to Lori for her contribution to the Kidney Kronicle.

World Kidney Day

London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) and The Kidney Foundation of Canada teamed up during World Kidney Day on March 9 by setting up an interactive display in Westmount Shopping Centre. Obesity is the theme of World Kidney Day this year and to help promote the importance of an active lifestyle LHSC's Kidney Care Centre (KCC) and the Kidney Foundation of Canada are joined by representatives from City of London and the Middlesex-London Health Unit who are promoting in motion, a community campaign to promote and celebrate healthy and active living.

“World Kidney Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of kidney disease. This year our focus is on promoting a healthy lifestyle to support kidney wellness” says Terri McCallum, Nurse Case Manager, KCC. “Eating healthy, regular exercise and weight management positively contribute to the health of our kidneys.”

LHSC's KCC and The Kidney Foundation of Canada Southwestern Ontario Chapter are located on the second floor of Westmount Shopping Centre.



From back left, Bryan Babington, in motion coordinator, City of London, Rizwana Ramzanali, Fund Development Officer, The Kidney Foundation of Canada, Jayne Scaterfield, public health nurse, Middlesex-London Health Unit, and from front left, Emma Klotz, volunteer, patient family advisory council, KCC, and Terri McCallum, nurse case manager, KCC share information about the important of healthy lifestyle during World Kidney Day, March 9.

Scalloped Potatoes with Cheese

Makes 6 servings



Ingredients:

4 medium potatoes peeled and thinly sliced

Oil spray

1 ½ teaspoons margarine

1 cup chopped onions

½ teaspoon minced garlic

3 tablespoons flour

1 ½ cup milk

1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Directions: Preheat oven to 375°F.

Important: Add potatoes to a saucepan of boiling water and cook until tender (about 10 minutes). Drain and discard cooking water.

Arrange cooked potato slices in a 8-9” casserole dish which has been lightly sprayed with oil.

In medium saucepan, melt margarine and sauté onions and garlic for 3-5 minutes. Add flour and cook stirring for 1 minute. Slowly stir in milk and stir until slightly thickened (~3-4 minutes).

Add black pepper if desired.

Pour sauce over potatoes.

Sprinkle grated cheese over the top.

Cover and bake for 1 hour.

Include 1 serving (½ cup) in your meal plan as: 2 fruits & vegetables 1 milk & alternative

Medication Safety!

Cathy Litwin from the LHSC Patient Safety Office has provided us with some tips on Medication Safety:

There are 5 important questions to ask about your medications:

1. Are there any changes being made? Have any medications been added, stopped or changed and why
2. Continuation of medications? What medications do I need to keep taking and why?
3. Proper use: How do I take my medications and for how long?
4. Monitoring: How will I know if my medication is working and what side effects do I watch for?
5. Follow-up: Do I need any tests and when do I book my next visit?

Some other helpful trips from Finding Balance Ontario www.findingbalanceontario.ca

Have your doctor, nurse practitioner or pharmacist review all your medications once per year

Medications include: prescriptions, over-the-counter pills, vitamins and herbal supplements

If your medications make you feel drowsy or dizzy, talk to your pharmacist or doctor. They may need to change the type, dose or time of day you take them.

Some medications may cause a drop in blood pressure which may increase your risk of falling.

Use only one pharmacy to fill your prescriptions and keep a current medication list in your wallet and at home.

Look for expired medications and return outdated products to your pharmacist.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!

The Renal Patient & Family Advisory Council is currently gathering information from renal patients regarding the possibility of hosting a patient education day for kidney patients and their families.



Please go to the following link to complete a survey which will help the council determine interest in an education day for patients and their families.

The survey will close on Tuesday May 16, 2017.

www.surveymonkey.com/r/5RZJ5BL



Your potassium is high

