Preventing Infection Following Kidney Transplant

Medications you take to help keep your body from rejecting your transplant may make you less able to fight illness and infection. During the first 3 months after your transplant, you may take higher dosages of your medications because chances of rejection are higher. It's very important to be careful following surgery. Be sure to take all your medicine as directed by your caregiver. It is also important to remember that while the risk of infection and rejection of your new organ may decrease over time, it never goes away completely. That's why you will continue taking your medications, to help prevent rejection.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Risk of bacterial and fungal infection is greatest in the first few weeks after your surgery so avoid:

- Large crowds in closed spaces.
- People with known infections or illnesses.
- Wear a surgical mask or similar barrier if you must be in crowds for the first couple months following surgery or as your caregiver suggests.
- Taking care of animals.

One of the easiest things you can do to help prevent infection is to wash your hands frequently.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU DEVELOP:

- A fever higher than 100° F (37.8° C) or as defined by your doctor
- Pain or tenderness around your transplant.
- Weight gain of more than three pounds in one day. Weigh yourself daily and record your weights. Keep this chart available for your caregiver.
- Swelling around the feet, hands, eyes, or other parts of the body.
- A decrease in urine output (passing less water).
- Burning on urination or more frequent urination.
- Cloudy or very bad-smelling urine.
- Blood in your urine.
- Flu-like *symptoms* (problems).
- Drainage or foul smelling discharge from the wound.

Always be on the lookout for the warning signs. Always tell your caregiver what's going on, even if it does not seem very important. Your transplant team needs to be involved.

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