

**ARE
YOU
READY?**



Emergency Preparedness Information For Dialysis Patients



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This guide is based on the Patient Disaster Plan template created by Providence Health Care, and was updated by the BC Renal Emergency Management Committee.



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Introduction

Disasters often strike quickly, and without warning. Natural disasters (blizzards, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.) or electrical power blackouts can disrupt healthcare services, including dialysis treatment.


In this manual, disaster is defined as a major event that directly affects your access to healthcare.

People on dialysis are at risk because they need power and water for their treatment. These may not be available for several days if it is a big disaster. Telephones may not work. You may not be able to use roads and bridges, emergency rooms will be crowded, and hospitals will give first attention to people who are injured. For these reasons, dialysis treatments may not be available.

This booklet gives some ideas on how to handle the first several days of an emergency until things can return to normal. We encourage patients and families to study this booklet and make a plan.

More information can be found at the following links:

- gov.bc.ca ▶ [Public safety and emergency services](#) ▶ [Emergency management](#) ▶ [Public preparedness and recovery](#)
- getprepared.gc.ca



Keep this booklet updated and store it with your emergency supplies.

Survival Instructions

1. Stay at home, unless you are hurt.
2. Immediately begin emergency diet plan. See page 12.
3. Wait at home for instructions and details on TV, the radio, by phone, or from on-site emergency responders.
 - **Find out your local emergency radio station and make a note of it:**
4. If you must go to an emergency shelter, tell the person in charge about your special needs.
5. Patients must take as much responsibility as possible for getting where they have to go, keeping in contact with the dialysis unit and **being available to come for dialysis at any time - day or night**. In the event of an emergency, your care team or emergency services will provide information on transportation. You may have to stay at the dialysis centre if transportation is a problem.
6. You may have to be moved from your home. This may be by ambulance, HandiDart, military vehicles, volunteers, or by air.
7. Keep your medications with you at all times. See the section on Medications for more details.
8. Keep an old or extra pair of glasses with your emergency supplies.
9. Please notify your hemodialysis facility any time your address, telephone or email changes.

Remember:
Hemodialysis centres may have to adjust your regularly scheduled dialysis treatments

Staying Calm

Emergencies can involve uncertainty and cause anxiety. It's important to try to stay calm during this time.

Some tips for staying calm include:

- Doing an activity to distract yourself.
- Reassuring yourself that the emergency situation is temporary.
- Trying relaxation techniques, for example:
 - **Muscle relaxation:** This involves squeezing all the muscles in the body at once. Hold this tension for several moments before releasing. Repeat three times.
 - **Deep breathing:** Simply take a minute to breathe in to the count of three, hold to the count of three, and breathe out to the count of three. Repeating this three times while thinking/saying the word "relax" will automatically calm the mind.
 - **Visualization:** Close your eyes for one minute and focus your mind on some calming cue, for example, a place that you go to relax... a beach... the mountains... and hold that image while counting to three. This will reduce your blood pressure, lower your heart rate and reduce stress.

Medical Alert

Why should you wear a medical alert?

If you are injured or unable to talk, medical workers need to know quickly that you are a person on dialysis or a transplant recipient.

How does it work?

Your medical alert is worn as a bracelet or necklace and bears an international symbol. Usually your medical alert is custom engraved with your main medical conditions, personal ID number and a 24-hour hotline number.

If needed, the computerized medical information you gave the medical alert company will be available in seconds to doctors and nurses, anywhere in the world. This important information will help medical personnel to give proper care, and could save your life.

In a disaster, the phone lines may be down. However, the alert will tell the medical people you are on dialysis. You can record your medical alert information below:

Medical Alert Personal ID Number:

24-Hour Hotline Number:

Helpful Tips:

1. A bracelet should be worn on the **opposite** side of your fistula. A medical alert bracelet on your access arm could potentially stop the blood flow and damage your fistula.
2. A necklace might be missed if your upper body clothes are rolled up.

Emergency Information

Should you require emergency medical attention, it's important you provide this information to your caregivers.

A copy of the following sheets should be with you at all times:

- Medication List Form (pg 5)
- Emergency Information Form (pg 6)
- Medical Condition and History Form (pg 7)
- Hemodialysis Information Form (pg 8)
- Wallet card (for PD and HD) (pg 9)
- Home dialysis patients only: Print a copy of the emergency disconnect procedures for your machine. Go to [BCRenal.ca](https://www.bcrenal.ca) ► [Health Info](#) ► [Managing My Care](#) ► [Emergency Preparedness](#)

All forms are available in Chinese and Punjabi at [BCRenal.ca](https://www.bcrenal.ca) ► [Health Info](#) ► [Managing My Care](#) ► [Emergency Preparedness](#)

**Remember:
Print the information
clearly, and update it if
any of the information
changes.**

Medications

- Know what medications you are taking, their names, strength, and how often you take them (for example: Tums 500mg, one with each meal and at bedtime).
- Know which medications are absolutely necessary for your survival.
- Keep a minimum of three days supply on hand at all times. Rotate the medication every 2-3 months, and check expiration dates. **Take this with you if you are evacuated.** Also, if you use other medical products (for example eye drops), include them in your emergency medicine supply.
- If you travel, carry your medication(s) in your hand-carried baggage and don't let it out of your sight. In disasters, luggage will likely get lost or misplaced. Suggestion: Keep the medication in a "fanny pack" you can wear, not carry. That way, your hands are free. Bring enough medication to last at least 1-2 week(s) longer than your planned trip.
- Have non-prescription drugs and other health supplies at home, including pain relievers, first aid kits, cough/cold medicine, and other medications as recommended by your health care team.

Medication List

- Keep an updated list of all your medications including the dosage and when you take them. Keep a copy with you at all times.
- Know which medications are absolutely necessary for your survival.
- Carry a list of your medications (amount, frequency) with you at all times.
- Keep (at least) a 3-day supply of medications at all times. Rotate and check expiration dates.
- If you travel, carry your medication in your hand luggage.

Medication	Dosage	Frequency

Emergency Information

Please print clearly, and update it if any of the information changes.
A copy of this sheet should be with you at all times.

Last Name	
First Name	
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Address	
Phone Number	
Personal Health Numer	
Your nearest relative or someone to be contacted in case of an emergency:	
Last Name	
First Name	
Relationship to You	
Address	
Phone Number	

Your Medical Condition and History



If you need to go to another hospital or clinic after a disaster, or if your medical records are unavailable or destroyed, having your medical information with you will help temporary care givers to understand your special needs.
You should update this annually and when treatment modalities change.

Date Completed	
Primary ESRD Diagnosis	
Other Medical Problems	
Infectious Precautions (if known)	
Allergies	
Blood Type (if known)	
Modality (type of treatment)	
Hemodialysis at home? (circle one)	YES / NO



Hemodialysis Information




Date Completed					
I. The Treatment Centre Where You Usually Get Your Care					
Name of Centre					
Address					
Phone					
Family Physician's Name					
Nephrologist's Name					
Other Important Information and Phone Numbers					
II. Usual Dialysis Prescription					
Dialyzer					
Dialysate	Ca _____	K _____	Na _____	Bicarbonate _____	
Dialysis hours		Dialysis treatments per week		Dry Weight	
Blood Flow Rate mL/min					
Heparinization	Loading dose: _____ Hourly rate: _____ u/hr D/C: _____				
III. Type of Vascular Access and Location					
Central Line: _____ Graft: _____ Fistula: _____ Location: _____					
CVC Line Block: _____ Length: _____					



Instructions: Fill out card, cut around the dotted line, fold on the solid lines, and store in your wallet.

For HD patients

For PD patients



PLANNING FOR
DISASTER


I am a dialysis patient:

Hemodialysis: In-centre
 Hemodialysis: Home
 Peritoneal Dialysis: Home

For emergency responders:

1. Caution dialysis access.
2. Check electrolytes and/or ECG for hyperkalemia.
3. Give calcium or sodium polystyrene sulphonate (Calcium Resonium or Kayexelate) if hyperkalemia.

Emergency Instructions for Dialysis Patients




- If safe, wait at home. The dialysis unit will try to contact you.
- Listen for instructions on radio or TV.
- If you have no contact from the dialysis unit then go to the nearest shelter, emergency reception centre or the Emergency Department. **Tell them you need dialysis.**

Begin Emergency Diet:

1. Restrict fluids to 2 cups a day or less.
2. No salt, salty foods or salt substitutes.
3. No high potassium foods: potato, tomato, orange, banana, melon, dried fruit, legumes, vegetables.
4. Restrict lower potassium foods: apple, applesauce, grapes, berries, canned peaches, pears or pineapple to 4 servings a day (serving is ½ cup).


1. Restrict protein foods: meat, fish, poultry, egg or peanut butter to 3 ounces (90 grams) a day or ½ your usual intake.
2. Restrict milk or yogurt to ½ cup a day (evaporated milk ¼ cup). Use Rice Dream® if available. **Count milk or Rice Dream® as part of your fluid restriction.**
3. Use unsalted crackers, cookies, rice, noodles, cereal, roti or bread to add calories.
4. Use jam, jelly, honey, sugar, candies, margarine, butter or oil freely to add calories.
5. If you have diabetes: keep instant glucose tablets, sugar, jam, candies, low potassium fruit juices or sugared pop on hand to treat low blood glucose.



This diet is not a substitute for dialysis. Be prepared:

- Have an emergency pack filled with food and supplies on hand.
- Keep at least 3 days worth of your medications on hand.

Patient Contact Information



Name: _____

PHN: _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____


Tel: _____ Email: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Out of Province Contact Name: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____



I am on Peritoneal Dialysis (PD).

Name: _____

My PD clinic is:

RCH ARH SMH VGH SPH KGH PRH RIH KBRH
 UHNBC RJH NRGH


PD clinic telephone: _____

My nephrologist's name: _____

My nephrologist's telephone: _____

Local Emergency Department/Community Hospital Instructions

- Contact the PD clinic/Nephrologist ASAP for treatment direction.
- Refer to BC Renal website guidelines and tools for information on clinical management of the patient on PD ➔



SCAN ME


Clinical Care Paths

- Peritonitis
- PD catheter infections
- Flow related complications
- Bowel management
- Catheter integrity malfunction
- Contamination of PD catheter
- Fluid assessment and management

Performing PD Procedures

- Performing a CAPD Baxter Twin Bag exchange
- Collecting a PD effluent specimen
- Changing a PD transfer set
- Adding medications to dialysate
- Performing an exit site dressing change

Patient Instructions



Be prepared:

- Have your emergency PD supply bag stocked with PD solutions, minicaps, transfer set and red clamps at all times.
- Take your PD emergency supply bag with you if you need to go to your local emergency department.
- Provide the local emergency department with this information wallet card when you arrive.
- Bring your cloudy bag of PD solution with you to your local emergency department if you think you might have peritonitis.

Preparing Your Emergency Pack

- Keep a minimum 3-day supply of foods and equipment for your “emergency diet” in a backpack or an easy-to-carry bag that can be carried by one person. Store it in an easily accessible place. This way you will be able to quickly move to a shelter or to travel elsewhere for dialysis, if necessary.
- Select foods you can replace regularly so they will not get too old.
- You may not have electricity, water or cooking equipment, so plan meals that do not need to be cooked.
- Keep important equipment such as can openers and hand sanitizers in your backpack.
- Keep a copy of these guidelines with your food supply (in your pack) and at your work.

Check your pack every six months for expiry dates and replace items as needed.

Emergency Supplies for Multi-day Survival: Food

Line the pack with a plastic garbage bag to keep it dry. An orange (or other bright colour) bag could also be used as an emergency signal.

If you are diabetic: keep instant glucose tablets, sugar, hard candy, low potassium fruit juice or sugared pop on hand to treat low blood sugar.

Suggested Foods:

- 12 4-ounce (125 ml) cans of fruit- applesauce, pears, peaches, pineapple only
- 1 Small box shredded wheat biscuits or puffed rice or puffed wheat
- 1 Box low salt crackers
- 1 Box low salt cookies
- 2 Bottles jelly, jam or honey
- 3 Bags hard candy (barley sugar, humbugs, peppermints, hard fruit candies)
- 3 85 - 213g cans of low salt tuna or salmon or 156g cans “33% less salt” flaked chicken or turkey
- 1 Small jar of peanut butter (optional)
- 1 Container of Rice Dream or 100g package of skim milk powder or 1 can of evaporated milk.
- 1 2 litre bottle of water and/or water disinfection equipment (see page 14)

Supplies for Multi-day Survival: Equipment

Keep these supplies in your “Emergency Diet” pack and check expiry dates every six months.

Line the pack with a plastic garbage bag to keep it dry. An orange (or other bright colour) bag could also be used as an emergency signal.

Equipment:

- Can opener (small, hand operated)
- Pocket knife/ Swiss army knife
- Whistle
- Pair of scissors
- Waterproof matches and candles
- Flashlight (either battery operated or hand cranked)
- Radio (either battery operated or hand cranked)
- Batteries for flashlight and radio (with spares)
- Basic first aid kit
- Water purification tablets
- 2 Litre container for water purification
- Household bleach and eye dropper for water purification (see page x) or water purification tablets
- Aluminum foil
- Container with lid
- Ziploc bags
- Plastic garbage bags – orange or brightly coloured bags can also be used as emergency signals
- Paper towels

Food Substitution List – Use this if you need to change your diet based on what food is available to you:

Food Items	Substitutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85 - 170g can tuna or salmon or • 156g can "33% Less Salt" flaked chicken/turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 oz low salt meat, fish, poultry or • 2 eggs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 unsalted crackers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 slice bread or • 4 slices white melba toast or • 2 graham wafers or • ½ cup plain rice or noodles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup canned fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup low-sodium, low-potassium fruit juice (apple, cranberry) and small apple or • ½ cup fresh or frozen berries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup reconstituted evaporated milk or powdered skim milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup fresh milk or cream

Emergency Diet Plan

If you are **UNABLE** to receive dialysis during a natural disaster or emergency, follow the Emergency Diet Plan. You will need to eat even less potassium, protein, phosphorus and fluid than usual. High levels of these in your body could be life threatening.

While planning for an emergency, follow these guidelines:

- Follow the Emergency Diet Meal Plan (see page 13) until dialysis is available again.
- **Do not have more than 2 cups (500 ml or 16 oz) of fluid a day.** You can chew gum or suck on hard candies to help with thirst.
- **Do not use salt or salt substitutes.** Use salt-free foods when possible. Remember that foods lower in salt will make you less thirsty.
- **Do not consume high potassium foods** such as potatoes, vegetables, bananas, oranges, melons, dried fruit and canned beans. Eat only the kind and amounts of fruits listed on the Emergency Diet Meal Plan (see page 13).
- **Eat less foods that are high in protein,** such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs and peanut butter.
- If you have diabetes, use instant glucose tablets, sugar, hard candy, low potassium fruit juice or sugared pop to treat low blood sugar. Do not use high potassium fruit juice, such as orange juice.
- If you are being evacuated and have time, add some butter or margarine to your pack for extra calories.
- Some emergencies (such as a snowstorm), allow you to stay in your home but you may not be able to get to dialysis for a while. You may be able to use fresh or frozen foods in place of some foods from your Emergency Diet Meal Plan (see Food Substitution List – page 11). Use these foods first.
- If your power goes out, foods in your refrigerator will keep for 1 to 2 days if the door is only opened briefly. Use these foods first.



**Preparing ahead could
SAVE YOUR LIFE.**

Sample Emergency Diet Meal Plan

Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup cold cereal (puffed wheat, puffed rice or 2 shredded wheat biscuits) • ½ cup (125ml) Rice Dream or ½ cup milk prepared from dry milk powder or ¼ cup evaporated milk mixed with ¼ cup purified or distilled water • 5 low-salt crackers with 2 tbsp jelly, jam or honey • ½ cup canned fruit* (packed in juice); drink the juice and count it as part of your daily fluid intake
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard candy
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 low-salt crackers with 6 tbsp jelly, jam or honey • ½ cup canned fruit* (packed in juice); drink the juice and count it as part of your daily fluid intake • Hard candy
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 cookies • ½ cup canned fruit* (packed in juice); drink the juice and count it as part of your daily fluid intake
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 can (85 - 170 grams) drained tuna or salmon (preferably low-salt) or • 1 can (156 grams) “33% Less Salt” flaked chicken or turkey • 15 low-salt crackers with 4 tbsp jelly, jam or honey • ½ cup canned fruit* (packed in juice); drink the juice and count it as part of your daily fluid intake

- If you are hungry, you can have another 10 low-salt crackers and 6 cookies each day.
- You could also have 2 tbsp peanut butter.
- Repeat this meal plan until dialysis is available.
- See substitution list on page 11.

***Canned fruit examples:**

Applesauce, pears, peaches, or pineapple that are low in sodium and potassium.

Water Disinfection

Before disinfecting water, first let water sit for 30 minutes to allow dirt to sink to the bottom. Then pour the water through a clean cloth or handkerchief to remove any extra dirt or floating matter. Next, select one of the following three methods for disinfecting water:

Method 1 - Water Purification Tablets

Add water purification tablets. Use as directed.

Method 2 - Boil Water

Boil water rapidly for 5 minutes. Swimming pool or spa water should not be used as a source of drinking water, because of chemicals in the water.

Method 3 - Bleach Solution

In an emergency, water may be disinfected with 5.25% sodium hypochlorite solution (household chlorine bleach). Do not use bleach that contains additives such as scent.

Use the following proportions:

One eye dropper = 0.05 mL

Clear Water:	One litre	2 drops
	Four litres	8 drops
Cloudy Water:	One litre	4 drops
	Four litres	16 drops

Mix water and bleach well by stirring or shaking in a container. Let stand for 30 minutes before using. There should be a

slight bleach smell in the water. If not, repeat the dosage and let stand for an extra 15 minutes.

Communications During a Disaster

Listen to _____
(insert local emergency radio station)

Telephone Access During an Emergency

A landline phone is the ideal means to make calls if an emergency results in power outages (for example, cell phones and cordless phones will have limited battery power before needing to be recharged). You may or may not lose cell phone service.

Learn how to send a text message. Texts use less battery power and are more likely to go through when the cell network is very busy. Learn ways to keep your cell phone charged longer. If you have a car, you can also use a car charger to recharge your cell phone.

List your Kidney Services telephone and fax numbers here:

Telephone:

Fax:









After a disaster or emergency, **DIALYSIS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE!** Are you prepared? It may save your life!



PLANNING FOR DISASTER



Preparing for a Disaster




-  • Keep a copy of the “**Emergency Preparedness Information for Dialysis Patients**” booklet with you. Ask dialysis staff for a copy if needed.
-  • Update the booklet information regularly.
-  • Tell dialysis staff of address or contact changes.
-  • Keep a list of your current medications with you.
-  • Keep at least 3 days of medication on hand.
-  • Make an **Emergency Pack**.

After a Disaster

- Stay at home. However, if you are hurt, go to a hospital. 
- Begin **Emergency Renal Diet**. 
- Wait for instructions. Keep radio, TV and phone ON! 
- If evacuated, tell them about your medical information and need for dialysis. 
- Be prepared to have dialysis day or night. 
- Be prepared to have dialysis at another dialysis unit. 

Emergency Renal Diet

For each day without dialysis, have no more than:

-  **2 cups** of fluids
-  **3-4 servings** of low potassium fruits such as apples, pears or canned fruits*
-  **1 can** (size of a deck of cards) of lower salt fish, poultry or meat, or 2-3 Tbsp peanut butter

*One serving = one small piece of fruit, 1/2 cup canned fruit or 1/2 cup fruit juice.

Choose:

- Lower salt crackers, cookies, cereal, roti, bread, plain rice or noodles
- Jam, jelly, honey, or candies for extra calories
- For people with diabetes: Keep instant glucose tablets, jam, jelly, honey, candies or sugar on hand to treat low blood sugars.

Avoid:

- High potassium foods such as dried fruit, canned beans, potatoes, bananas and oranges
- Added salt, and salty foods/snacks