

To Our Valued Patients:

As you may be aware, the country has experienced a dramatic increase in COVID-19 infections. This has affected all aspects of the healthcare system. Just like other dialysis providers, we are facing multiple challenges, including staff and care team absences in our centers, increased operational measures for treatments involving patients who are COVID-19 positive, and impacts on the supply chain that have caused delays to our usual dialysis product shipments. These disruptions require us to use our supplies carefully, and to manage our center operations to avoid missed treatments wherever possible.

To work through the supply chain issues we are experiencing, and make sure you receive adequate dialysis care, you may experience adjustment to your treatment, such as:

1. Modest reductions in the rate of dialysis fluid passing through the machines
  - For most people on dialysis, the usual dialysis fluid flow rate is more than what's needed to provide adequate cleansing of the blood. A small reduction will only be done if directed by your kidney doctor and will have a minimal impact on the dose of dialysis delivered.
  - Your kidney doctor may order additional blood tests to monitor treatment effectiveness.
  - As soon as supply levels return to normal, we expect kidney doctors will restore dialysis fluid flow rates to prior levels.
2. Shortening of treatment time
  - If care team shortages become so severe that centers are in danger of closing or canceling some treatments, reducing treatment time modestly can allow the center to make sure that everyone gets the major portion of their usual dialysis. This procedure has been used in the past during natural disasters.
  - Treatment time will only be reduced for you if it can be done safely, as directed and determined by your kidney doctor.
  - Your kidney doctor may order additional blood tests to monitor treatment effectiveness.
  - Treatment times will return to normal as care team members return to work.

With respect to our staffing, we are following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines to bring care team members back to work as soon as possible after a COVID-19 infection and providing those recovering with additional protective equipment like N95 masks.

To remain as healthy as possible, please continue to seek booster vaccines or additional doses as appropriate, wear your mask, and socially distance. Please carefully monitor your diet and fluid intake and adhere to medications to maximize well-being. These measures are more important than ever so you can stay your healthiest and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on you.

Thank you for your understanding as we all continue to try to support each other through this crisis.

Sincerely,

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