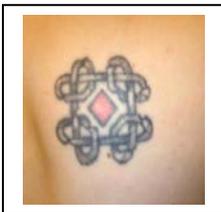


# HEALTHY LIVING with a TRANSPLANT to AVOID INFECTIONS

TRANSPLANT MANITOBA  
Pediatric Kidney Program

## Piercing, Tattoos and Body Art

• You should not have anything done that will break the surface of the skin in the first year after your transplant.

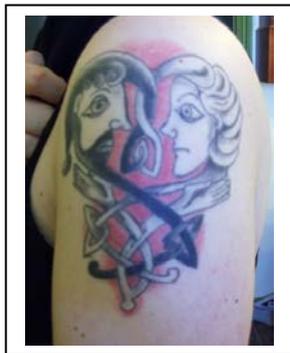


- If you are planning on getting a piercing, it should be done by a licensed professional.
- There is a higher risk of infection when piercing the cartilage (for example, the centre of the nose or the upper part of the earlobe).
- Make sure you have the time to look after your new piercing, keeping it clean and checking daily for any redness or swelling.



- Ask the piercer to give you written instructions on how to care for your new piercing at home.

- Before you get a tattoo, remember...
- Dirty needles can pass infections like hepatitis B and HIV from one person to another. That is why re-using needles is illegal. And when you take medicines that lower your immune system, you are at even more risk of getting an infection.
- Some people have serious allergic reactions to the ink used in tattooing.
- Sometimes tattoos can leave scars.
- Some people have swelling or a burning feeling in their tattoo when they have a special test called an MRI. This is rare and it doesn't last long. If your doctor says you need an MRI, make sure you tell the people at the MRI clinic that you have a tattoo, so they can take precautions.



- The tattoo artist should give you verbal and written instructions on caring for your tattoo.
  - Always wash your hands with soap and water before cleaning the tattoo and the skin around it.
  - Avoid touching your tattoo except to clean it.
  - Call your family doctor or pediatrician if you think your tattoo may be infected – signs of infection are things like increased redness, swelling, painful to touch and/or discharge/pus coming from the area.

## Manicures and Pedicures

- If you are treating yourself to a manicure or a pedicure, make sure you are going to a licensed salon or spa.
- It is okay to ask to see the equipment they use to clean their tools.
- Regular nail polish is okay to use. Avoid gel nails, as they can harbor infection.
- It is okay to have your cuticles pushed back, but better to ask that they do not cut your cuticles.
- Call your family doctor or pediatrician if you think your nails, fingers or toes may be infected – signs of infection are things like redness, swelling, painful to touch and/or discharge/pus coming from the area.



- **REMEMBER:** If you are having a procedure at the hospital (e.g. an operation or a biopsy), you cannot be wearing any nail polish on your fingers or toes at that time. So wait until after you go home to have your spa day!

# HEALTHY LIVING with a TRANSPLANT to AVOID INFECTIONS

TRANSPLANT MANITOBA  
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## Pets

- Consider waiting to get a new pet until after the first year from transplant.
- Avoid contact with animals that have diarrhea.
- Wash your hands carefully after handling pets.
- The person who has had a transplant should not clean bird cages, bird feeders, aquariums or litter boxes. If the transplant recipient needs to do these tasks, they should wear disposable gloves and a standard surgical mask.
- Avoid stray animals and do not pet strays.
- When thinking about what kind of pet you might like to have, remember:
  - Rodents (e.g. mice, hamsters, gerbils) have a risk of transmitting a viral illness.
  - Young cats have risk of transmitting a bacterial illness.
  - Cats also have a risk of transmitting a parasite.
  - Reptiles (e.g. snakes, iguanas, lizards and turtles), chicks and ducklings have a risk of transmitting a bacterial illness
  - Dogs are less likely to transmit illness to people, but they are not completely “risk-free.”



## Water and Food Safety

- Pay close attention to any ‘boil water’ advisories.
- Well water from private or public wells should be screened frequently for bacteria.
- Do not drink water directly from lakes or rivers.
- Avoid swallowing water during swimming or water rides at amusement parks.
- Avoid hot tubs.
- Standing water in the home or basement should be promptly cleaned up to avoid growth of mold.
- Do not drink tap water or use ice cubes when traveling to countries with poor sanitation. You should also be careful not to drink water when showering during this type of travel.
  - If you get a cut, scrape or other open wound when swimming in the ocean or in a fresh water lake or stream, the wound should be thoroughly cleaned with an uncontaminated water source.
- Avoid drinking or eating food made with unpasteurized milk or drinking unpasteurized fruit or vegetable juice/cider.
- Do not eat raw or undercooked eggs, including foods containing raw eggs.
- Do not eat raw or undercooked meat, poultry or fish.
- Do not eat any raw or undercooked seafood.
- Do not eat raw seed sprouts.
- Be sure to wash all fruits and vegetables.
- Make sure to clean all work surfaces when preparing foods. Do not use the same utensils for cooked/prepared foods that you have used with the uncooked food.
- Avoid cheeses made from unpasteurized milks, and in particular, soft cheeses (feta, Brie, Camembert).
- Avoid uncooked pate, meat spreads, cold cuts and smoked seafood.

