

Preventing Peritonitis

When germs enter your abdominal cavity (peritoneum), it can cause an infection called peritonitis.

Potential Causes of Peritonitis

- Accidentally touching the open connection or disconnection points of your peritoneal dialysis (PD) system, including your PD catheter extension set, often called 'touch contamination'
- If a catheter exit site infection spreads along the PD catheter tunnel under the skin and into the abdominal cavity
- Forgetting to wear your mask and clean your hands at proper times as taught by your PD nurse
- Using any contaminated item



Signs and Symptoms you may have Peritonitis

- Drained dialysis fluid that looks cloudy
- Pain or tenderness in your abdomen
- Fever, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- An increase in fibrin formation that may cause poor draining



Routine Care and Prevention

Germs that cause peritonitis are often found on your hands or in the air you breathe out of your mouth and nose. Germs can also get into your peritoneal cavity from your PD catheter exit site if it is not kept clean.

To help prevent peritonitis, you need to routinely inspect and care for your PD catheter exit site and carefully prepare before doing PD procedures. Follow aseptic technique as taught to you by your PD nurse.

- Place a mask over your mouth and nose before doing any PD procedures
- Always wash your hands thoroughly before caring for your catheter exit site or doing your PD procedures
- Avoid putting any powder, body lotion, or cream on your PD exit site, unless approved by your kidney doctor



Notify your PD nurse immediately if you suspect you may have caused touch contamination. For example, touched the end of your PD catheter extension set, potentially used a touch contaminated PD item, or forgot to wear your mask.

Preparing for your PD Treatments

- Close doors and windows, shut off fans, remove distractions
- Remove children and pets from the room
- Clean work surface and gather supplies
- Wash hands thoroughly as taught by your PD nurse
- Always follow aseptic technique as taught to you by your PD nurse
- Perform hand hygiene at appropriate times
- Perform PD catheter exit site care and all PD procedures as instructed by your PD nurse

