

## 1

### Why have I been referred to a kidney care clinic?

People with reduced kidney function are referred to a kidney care clinic. The clinic's team of doctors and other health professionals can help you maintain your kidney health. They will support you through your kidney journey and, if necessary, prepare you for changes in your kidney function, including in some cases a kidney transplant or dialysis.



Some patients come to our clinic for a few months but most come for much longer (i.e., several months or years). Treatment options vary based on each person's needs.

## 2

### How does a visit to a kidney care clinic differ from a visit to my kidney doctor's office?



The biggest difference between a kidney care clinic and a kidney doctor's office is the number of health professionals available. As a patient, you'll have a team helping you. This includes a nurse, dietitian, social worker, clerk and, in some clinics, a pharmacist, in addition to your kidney doctor. The team will work closely with your kidney doctor during your time at the clinic.

Each member of the team has a different focus (explained further in question 3). Together, they will help you and your family manage your kidney disease. The number of providers you see at each visit will depend on your needs at the time.

### 3

## What does each clinic team member do?

### **Nephrologist (Kidney Doctor)**

Your nephrologist will assess your health and make suggestions to help you manage your kidney disease (and other related illnesses).

### **Nurse**

The nurse will provide you with information about your kidneys and treatment. You may receive telephone calls from the nurse in between appointments to check in on you and your health and discuss lab results and blood pressure readings.



### **Dietitian**

The dietitian will assist you in planning and maintaining a kidney-friendly diet. Your culture, lifestyle, preferred foods, and current kidney function will be considered before making suggestions. You will learn about the different foods that are best for your kidneys.

### **Social Worker**

The social worker will help you with emotional and practical concerns related to your health. They can provide you with mental health resources and connect you to peer support.

### **Pharmacist (where available)**

The pharmacist will help you manage your medications and may suggest changes throughout your kidney journey. They will review both prescription and non-prescription medications (e.g., vitamins, supplements, herbal and traditional medicines) to assess what's best for your kidneys.

### **Clerk**

The clerk will arrange and schedule your appointments at the kidney care clinic.

## 4

### What do I need to know about my clinic appointments?



It is very important that you attend all scheduled appointments at the kidney care clinic. This gives you the best chance of maintaining kidney function and staying on top of your overall health. Missing appointments can mean missed information and assessments.

If you cannot make an appointment, please let the clinic know as soon as possible. We are happy to reschedule. If your contact information changes, please let us know as well.

Appointments can take place either in-person or by phone or video, depending on your needs and preferences. Typically, there will be a bit of both.

Your first appointment will likely take 1-2 hours, but can sometimes take up to 3 hours. As you'll often be seeing multiple providers, future visits usually take 30-90 minutes.

If you do not speak or understand English, please bring an English-speaking family member or friend. We will provide an interpreter whenever possible.

## 5

### What should I bring or have ready for each clinic appointment?

- Your medications or a list of medications you take, including non-prescription products (vitamins, supplements, herbal, and traditional medicines)
- Your BC Services Card
- A blood pressure record (if you record your blood pressure)
- A blood sugar record (if you have diabetes)
- A list of questions and concerns you wish to discuss with the team



If you have a hearing aid, please wear it to the appointment.

You are welcome to bring a family member or friend with you to your appointments. In fact, we encourage it!

## 6

### What happens after each clinic appointment?

After your appointment, you will receive your next appointment date (mailed or e-mailed to you, or provided by the clerk). You may also receive a new lab requisition and prescription (faxed to your pharmacy).

If your kidney doctor suggests further tests, we will contact you. Your kidney doctor will keep your primary care provider and specialist(s) up to date. Your team at the kidney clinic is also available if there are changes related to your kidneys that occur in between clinic visits.

We look forward to working with you and supporting your kidney health!

