News from CureGN

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What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 (coronavirus) is a virus that causes mild to severe illness. This virus spreads from close contact between people, droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking, and touching a contaminated surface and then touching your face. You can protect yourself from this illness by staying home as much as possible, wearing a mask in public, cleaning surfaces frequently, and washing your hands.

How COVID-19 changed the management of glomerular diseases

As COVID-19 infections spread across the world, nephrologists and their patients faced difficult decisions regarding management of glomerular diseases. Patients with glomerular diseases, particularly when in an active phase, require frequent clinic visits and laboratory tests. Treating glomerular diseases often involves the use of medications that suppress the immune system, some of which can only be given in hospital-based infusion centers. Just making a diagnosis of a glomerular disease requires a kidney biopsy, a procedure that may be considered "elective."

There are no standards of care for how to manage glomerular diseases during a pandemic, but many of the CureGN investigators have been working diligently during this time, not only to tend to hospitalized patients with COVID-19 infections, but also to ensure that their glomerular disease patients staying-at-home receive the best and safest care for their disease.

The CureGN investigators at Columbia University in New York City (the epicenter of the U.S. pandemic) published guidelines for other nephrologists on how to manage immunosuppressive medicines, utilize home-based infusions and laboratory tests, maintain a COVID-compliant infusion center, and harness the power of telemedicine to keep close contact with patients.

The article is available online at
cjasn.asnjournals.org/content/early/2020/05/04/CJN.04530420

Fun Low-Risk Activities to Do During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Takeout from a Restaurant   Play Tennis   Go Camping   Bike with a Friend

CDC's Tips for Taking Care of Your Mental Health

Take breaks and do things you love.

Exercise releases endorphins, which make you happy.

Understanding the risks can put your mind at ease.

Keep in touch with your support system.

Ask for help.

CureGN Patient's Experience with COVID-19
By Stephanie

I was tested for COVID-19 on March 17th. I experienced a variety of symptoms during COVID-19. A few days before it even occurred to me to get tested, I noticed myself not being able to perform at my normal pace while working out. I felt a little out of breath on the treadmill and a little out of it, but nothing too noticeable. I was still able to continue with my exercises. The night before I worked out, I had a bit of a sore throat (which is a typical symptom of mine before getting a cold or sinus infection). However, it honestly barely hurt like it normally would. I also had a very small cough for about a day, but then began to feel achy. The achy feeling and loss of energy lasted a few days - although I did not have a fever and didn't feel terribly sick.

I got tested anyways because I was exposed to both COVID and the Flu. I was negative for the Flu and waited for 2 weeks for my COVID results. Later in the week, my nose started running, I had headaches and terrible face pain. I was diagnosed with a sinus infection and treated with a Z-Pack. It seemed to help. While I was on the Z-Pack, I had an upset stomach and wasn't sure if that was from COVID or the antibiotics. I then realized that I had no sense of smell. I was able to taste everything but couldn't smell anything. Eventually, I had felt shortness of breath and chest pains. I was put on Symbacort to help with my breathing. My breathing finally feels better, and I'm starting to get more of my smell back. In mid-April I was able to start smelling sweet smells for short periods of time. Now I'm starting to smell most smells.

Check out these websites for more information on COVID-19!

- CDC website: cdc.gov
- NKF website: kidney.org
- NephCure: nephcure.org/recent-news