

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers About Home Dialysis

Why choose home dialysis?

- Independence and flexibility
- Can provide better health and quality of life for many patients
- No transportation or scheduling hassles
- Usually a more normal diet
- Better survival
- Travel

What are the home dialysis choices?

- Traditional Home Hemodialysis: performed 3 times per week, typically for about 4 hours per session
- Short Daily Home Hemodialysis: performed 5-6 times per week, typically for about 2-1/2 hours per session
- Peritoneal Dialysis (PD): 4 to 5 exchanges per day (CAPD) or nightly cycler exchanges (CCPD)

Who should consider home dialysis?

- Patients who are able to manage their own care responsibly, either alone or with a helper
- Patients who are interested in greater flexibility with school, work, travel and family life/child-care
- Patients seeking more independence and control over their schedule

What support will my dialysis center provide?

- Complete training to home, one-on-one with a registered nurse
- Nurses available 24/7 by phone
- Clinic visits
- In-home visits and support
- Supply delivery to patient's home

Will my diet change on PD?

Yes, PD patients lose protein and potassium in the drained dialysates solution. You will be encouraged to eat a high protein diet. Most PD patients are able to increase their potassium intake as well. You will still have to limit phosphorus intake.

Can I be intimate on PD?

Yes, the PD catheter will not affect intimacy with your partner.

Can I live alone on PD?

Yes, you can live alone. Many patients of all ages and conditions are doing PD without a partner. Please ask a PD nurse if this is a concern for you.

Why more frequent home hemodialysis instead of 3 times a week?

Before you go on dialysis your kidneys work continuously: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They play an essential role balancing fluids and electrolytes in the body while removing waste products. The most common form of hemodialysis is performed three times a week, approximately four hours per session. This therapy is known as "traditional in-center" or "intermittent" dialysis. Because of the number of days (2 to 3) between treatments, intermittent dialysis can lead to large fluctuations in body weight due to water retention, accumulation of wastes, and electrolyte imbalances. More frequent home hemodialysis reduces these wide fluctuations by shortening the time between treatments. As a result, it is gentler on the body and may lead to health benefits.

What benefits are associated with more frequent home dialysis?

Many patients report - and various studies have confirmed - that, compared to three-times-weekly in-center hemodialysis, more frequent home hemodialysis may offer the following health and quality of life benefits:

- Less stress on the heart
- Better blood pressure control with fewer medications
- Much quicker recovery time after treatment
- Improved appetite and the ability to drink more
- Fewer depressive symptoms
- Better mental and physical health
- More energy and vitality
- Feeling of being in control of treatment and life
- Lower risk of death