

## Things to Discuss with the Social Worker

- Can my friends and family visit me during dialysis?
- Who can help me explain dialysis to my family and friends? \*
- Who can I talk to about changes in my body that upset me?
- Is there another patient I can talk to about what to expect? \*
- When will I feel well enough to work?
- Can dialysis be scheduled around my work/school hours?
- What happens to me if I can't do the same job anymore?
- How do I decide whether to apply for disability or not?
- Should I tell my employer about my kidney disease?
- Who can I talk to about insurance or work/school questions?
- How do I get over feeling like my body has let me down? \*
- How can I adjust to changes in how my body looks? \*
- Are there any support groups that I can join? \*

- Do most people with kidney failure feel the way I do? \*
- Will I ever feel \_\_\_\_\_

**\* Does your facility have a Network Patient Representative? If you do, ask them to share what they think on these subjects!**

### **Adherence To Treatment**

#### In medical terms:

- ◆ Not missing a treatment.
- ◆ Completing the full treatment, not stopping a treatment early.
- ◆ Taking medication on time regularly.
- ◆ Following doctor's advice regarding diet, exercise, and dialysis treatment.
- ◆ Not being "disruptive" in your dialysis facility.

#### In personal terms :

- ◆ Acceptance of renal disease and adapting to the lifestyle changes it may bring.
- ◆ Understanding what I need to do, and how to do it.
- ◆ Coming to grips with depression, alcohol abuse, and/or drug abuse.
- ◆ Getting involved in my own self-care.

If you have a complaint or concern with your dialysis care you may file a grievance with The Renal Network.  
Patients may call: 1.800.456.6919; email: [info@nw10.esrd.net](mailto:info@nw10.esrd.net);  
or write: The Renal Network, 911 E. 86th Street, Suite 202,  
Indianapolis, IN 46240; or visit our website: <http://www.therenalnetwork.org>

## **Frequently Asked Questions by Patients New to Dialysis**



# Following Your Treatment Leads to Better Health= a Better Quality of Life



Following your treatment regimen makes a difference in how you feel. Cutting short your dialysis time, skipping treatments, not monitoring fluids and ignoring your binders,

might not seem a "big deal" at the time, but each thing adds up taking its toll. As a new dialysis patient you may wonder why you have to do certain things, how your treatment works, or who you should ask your questions to about kidney disease in general. Here is a checklist that can help you organize your thoughts. When you are finished you can discuss these things with your Social Worker, Nurse, your Kidney Doctor or your Network Patient Representative.

## Things to Discuss with the Doctor or Nurse

- How do my medications help my condition?
- What is EPO and how does it help my anemia?
- How can I protect my vascular access?
- How long will it take me to get used to my treatment?

- How does dialysis clean my blood?
- How does the dialysis machine protect my safety?
- What happens to me if I miss some dialysis treatment time?
- What will happen to me if power goes out during dialysis?
- What supplies should I keep on hand for emergencies?
- What is adequate dialysis? What does it have to do with time?
- Why are dialyzers reused?
- Who should I talk to if I want a kidney transplant?
- What can I do to make dialysis go smoothly?
- When will I start feeling like "myself" again?
- When will I feel well enough to work?
- Can dialysis be scheduled around my work/ school hours?
- How long can people live on dialysis?
- Why is exercise important for me?

- What kinds of exercise can I do safely?
- When will my life start to seem "normal" again?
- What are my treatment choices?

## Things to Discuss with the Dietician

- When will I get my appetite back?
- What can we cook that every one in my family can eat?
- How can I cope with thirst or food cravings?
- How do I know how much sodium or potassium is in a food?
- How can I afford to buy the foods I'm supposed to eat?
- What can I do about constipation?
- Who can help me with questions about what to eat or drink?
- What can I eat if I go to a restaurant or someone's home?

