

Dialysis Extends Life - Make the Most of It!

The development of this educational booklet was inspired and made possible by dialysis patients, facility staff, Danielle Kirkman - PhD, and Network 3 staff to promote positive changes in the lives of dialysis patients. We believe in the importance of engaging you, the dialysis patient, to become involved in your health care and improving your overall well-being.

Research demonstrates ESRD patients may achieve potential benefits from increasing physical activity. This booklet is meant to serve you as a guide and assist you in identifying how physical activity is of benefit to your life. You will not be asked to run a marathon or to climb a mountain. It is much simpler than that! Together we will make a difference to the way everyone views physical activity within the dialysis community.

Are you ready to approach physical activity in a completely new way in your life?

**Don't Think of Dialysis as an Obstacle,
but Rather See It for What It Does...**

Dialysis Extends Life –

Make the Most of It!



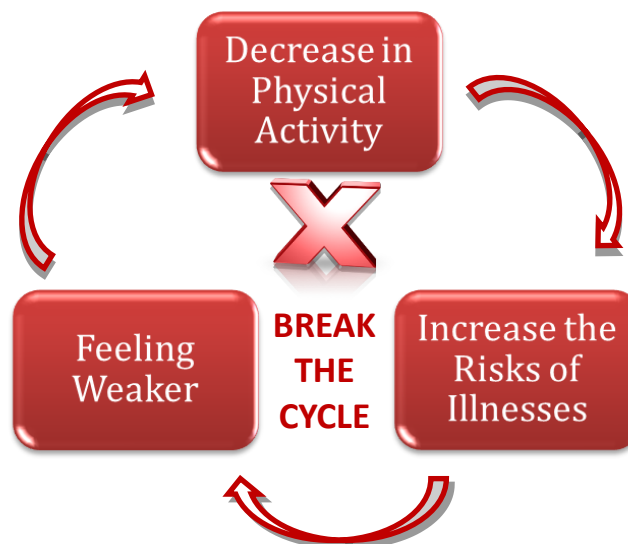
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I. Physical Activity and the Dialysis Patient

Leading an inactive lifestyle is a great risk to your health! Being inactive increases the risks of illness and also makes the body & mind weaker. Your body quickly gets used to doing less if you allow it. It's important to stay active!

The weaker we are the more inactive we become and this starts a vicious cycle. This cycle can be broken by increasing your motivation and physical activity levels.



Being active helps keep the body and mind strong and fit to handle stress and illnesses. Remember, you do not have to run a marathon or climb a mountain, but... **you can learn what you ARE capable of doing to remain as healthy as possible.**

It is important to understand that people with kidney disease can also lead a healthy lifestyle.

II. Why is Increasing Physical Activity Important?

Coping with dialysis can build tension and challenges patients emotionally. Physical activity can improve the quality of life for patients with kidney disease both physically and emotionally. Benefits include the following:



Reduces the risk of heart disease

Many factors of kidney disease make you more susceptible to heart disease. Increasing physical activity helps to manage your blood pressure and cholesterol; it increases HDL, which is the good cholesterol and lowers LDL, the bad cholesterol. It also makes your heart more efficient and improves the health of your blood vessels. This reduces the risk of heart disease and strokes.

Better muscle health

When the kidneys fail, toxins and acids that are usually removed by the kidney build up in the blood. These toxins and acids cause your muscles to weaken. The muscles are important as not only do they keep you strong and able to carry out every day activities, but active muscles are important for a healthy metabolism as they use up sugars and fat from the blood for energy. Increasing your physical activity keeps your muscles active and prevents them from weakening.



Keeps You Fit

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Increasing your physical activity level helps keep you fit and strong. Keeping fit allows you to carry out your every day living activities and take part in leisure activities as well. As you become fitter you can do more with less effort. This means that you are likely to remain independent and have a better quality of life.

Emotional Benefits



Dealing with dialysis means having to take care of your medical care issues, cope with the changes in your lifestyle, and adjust to a rollercoaster of emotions. Patients on hemodialysis experience lower depression and anxiety levels

as a result of increasing their physical activity levels. Engaging in regular activities helps to reduce stress and leaves you feeling refreshed and relaxed.

- Physical activity improves a person's sense of well-being.
- It helps in dealing with depression and the negative effects of stress.
- Builds a sense of empowerment as you begin to take charge for your health and the outcomes.



III. Getting Ready to Increase Your Physical Activity

Safety First

This information is designed to encourage you to increase your physical activity and empower you to make beneficial lifestyle changes.



Before you increase your physical activity or take part in any exercise consult your doctor.

You should not engage in any strenuous physical activity if:

- ⇒ You have chest pain at rest or you have suffered a cardiac event in the last 6 weeks.
- ⇒ You are breathless at rest and you have visible swelling from fluid overload.
- ⇒ You have an acute infection or a body temperature above 101°F.
- ⇒ You have poor diabetic control.
- ⇒ You do not take blood pressure medication and have a blood pressure above 160/100 mmHg or below 100/60 mmHg.

Please continue to follow your prescribed diet and take all your medications as directed by your doctor.

Be sure to engage in activities that help you feel most comfortable!

First, ask yourself...

What is it that I would like to accomplish?

Establish a goal for yourself!

You may begin doing something small and slowly move on to accomplish your set goal. Split your main goal into smaller weekly realistic and achievable goals.

For example:

Your Main Goal is: “In 6 months’ time I would like to be able to walk at least 3 miles per week.”

Smaller Goals: “By next week I will make sure I have a comfortable pair of shoes to start walking”; “Over the next two weeks I will go for 10 minute walks before I start my dialysis treatment.”

Ensure that any goals you set are **SMART**:
Specific **M**easurable **A**chievable **R**ealistic **T**ime based

Identify Potential Barriers

Identify in advance any barriers that may prevent you from achieving your goals and make a plan to overcome them.

For example:

“I will ask another patient who is also driven to increase their physical activity to walk with me before our dialysis, that way when I don’t feel like walking I will have someone to motivate me.”

IV. Increasing Your Physical Activity Levels

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Walking regularly is an easy, convenient way to increase your physical activity levels.



Take Action

There are many ways to easily incorporate physical activity into your everyday living. A few examples are:

- ♦ Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- ♦ Park your car further away from the store when shopping.
- ♦ If you go to watch a sporting event, take a short walk around at half time.
- ♦ Clean the house, wash the car, do some gardening work.
- ♦ Go for a family walk after dinner.
- ♦ Use light weights and stretch your arms while watching TV.
- ♦ Go grocery shopping.
- ♦ Pedal a stationary bike while watching TV.



The Key Is To Find Something You Enjoy Doing!

Your dialysis facility might offer wellness classes to assist you to focus on goals such as managing fluid intake, building social skills, and coping with your emotions. Work with the staff to help you increase your physical activity levels and meet your personal goals.



Participation in activities during your dialysis session is a convenient way to increase your levels of physical activity while in a supervised setting.

Some Flexibility/Stretching activities while sitting may include:

- ♦ **Forearm Exercise:** Squeeze a stress ball to work your arms.
- ♦ **Neck Stretch:** Sit up straight and gently bring your right ear to your right shoulder, then bring your head back up and lower your left ear to your left shoulder. *(Repeat process)*
- ♦ **Bicep Exercise:** With your elbows elevated in front of you, and your hands at eye level, bring one hand up towards your shoulder and vice-versa. *(Do not try during dialysis)*
- ♦ **Calf Exercise:** Simply push into the floor with your toes until your heels are as far off the ground as they will go, and then lower them to the floor again.
- ♦ **Shoulder Warm Up:** Sit up straight and bring your shoulders up to your ears, hold it for 3 seconds, and lower your shoulders. *(Repeat process)*
Sit up straight and move your left shoulder in a forward-circle motion. Once finalized, switch over to continue with your right shoulder. You may do the same activity in a backward-circle motion.

“The key to these activities is repetition!”

V. Your Overall Well-Being



It is important to understand that your physical health and your emotions are linked. Your emotional health means how you cope, how you live your life, and how you stay connect-

ed to the world around you. It is much more than your feelings; it means having a sense of purpose, experiencing joy and laughter, having hope, and maintaining a positive attitude. Your emotional well-being is just as important to the body as physical activity.

Find activities that are refreshing and clear your mind.

Such activities may include:

- Reading
- Playing dominos or bingo
- Going shopping
- Talking and socializing with friends
- Going to the movies
- Joining a peer support group
- Listening to Music
- Dancing

The list is infinite... pick your favorite activity and make it a goal to enjoy it at least once a week!

**NOW YOU ARE READY...
BE ACTIVE AND PLEDGE TO MAKE A POSITIVE
CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE!**



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