

April 2016

QUALITY INSIGHTS RENAL NETWORK 3



# KIDNEYS R US

NEWSLETTER

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## Kidney Transplant: Another Treatment Option

Kidney transplant is often overlooked as a treatment option for Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease. Many patients are aware of hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis as treatment options. Kidney transplant is often viewed as something else all together. Although it is not a cure, it is an alternate form of treatment for renal failure just like dialysis. However, a successful transplant will allow the recipient to return to a life free of the demands and restrictions of dialysis. It often helps to increase the quality of life of the recipient.

Kidney transplant patients require a lifetime of follow-up care to ensure the transplant remains functioning. That includes regular physician follow-up as well as ongoing medication management to ensure the individual's body does not reject the transplanted kidney. Exercise and proper eating also play a part in the success of the transplant.

### **How does a Stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease patient get a transplant?**

There are currently two ways that individuals in need of a kidney transplant can obtain one. Renal patients need to have a medical evaluation to determine if transplant is a good option for them. Many patients choose to be assessed by a transplant hospital and get "listed" on a deceased donor waiting list. The advantage is that the recipient does not have to approach family or friends about donation or deal with the conflicting emotions related to receiving an offer of donation. A deceased donor kidney removes the emotions that are often associated with a living donor situation. The disadvantage is the wait that can accompany a deceased donor kidney. Some patients are listed for years before a kidney becomes available.

The second option is to locate a living donor who is compatible with the recipient's blood and tissue typing. Many times family members or friends of Stage 5 renal patients will have blood tests completed to see if they are a "match".

When a match occurs the living donor will have additional medical tests to determine if they are healthy and a good candidate for donation. If they are found to be appropriate for donation, the transplant can be scheduled. The donor and recipient will work with the transplant team to arrange for the transplant.

The transplant team often consists of the transplant surgeon, transplant nephrologist, nurse coordinators, social workers, dietitians and financial counselors. The team will work with patients pre and post transplant to ensure the success of the transplant. Each member of the team will work with the recipient to make sure they are prepared for the surgery and the follow-up care that is required.

Dialysis patients who are interested in transplant need to prepare for the surgery and the recovery. Increasing physical activity in preparation will help the recipient recover more easily and return to a more active lifestyle. Simple changes in the level of exercise or activity prior to transplant can go a long way to ease recovery. Following the dialysis diet, taking ordered medications and attending full treatments will also help prepare an individual for a kidney transplant.

If you are interested in learning more about kidney transplant, please visit:

[www.kidney.org/atoz/content/kidneytransnewlease](http://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/kidneytransnewlease)

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/kidneytransplantation.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/kidneytransplantation.html)

<http://lkdn.org/index.html>

## **Increasing Physical Activity**

### **Benefits for all Dialysis Patients**

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.

Coping with dialysis can build tension and challenge 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 aspects 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 because not only do they keep you strong and able to carry out every day activities, but active muscles are important for a healthy metabolism since they use up sugars and fat from the blood for energy. Increasing your physical activity keeps your muscles active and strong and prevents them from weakening.

### **Keeps you fit**

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

**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.



## JOIN THE PAC

The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) for QIRN3 consists of dialysis patients, transplant patients and family members of those patients. The committee meets once every two months to discuss issues relevant to ESRD patients. The PAC members have a genuine concern for quality of care issues and encourage patients to be involved in their healthcare. They are willing to share skills and experience with others. Each facility is encouraged to have a PAC representative. Talk to your social worker to volunteer!

Call toll free 1-888-877-8400 to join the PAC.

*To File a Grievance Regarding your Dialysis Care please contact:*

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