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Quality Insights Renal Network 3

Serving New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands



Kidneys R Us

FROM THE
QIRN3 PATIENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Home Dialysis: Is it Right for You?

Home dialysis is a treatment option that can have a great impact on a dialysis patient's quality of life. Making the choice to become a home dialysis patient can be difficult. It means taking more responsibility for your own care. It can provide a patient who is willing to assume that responsibility with a greater sense of control, freedom and independence as he/she continues life's journey with kidney disease.

Continuous Cycling Peritoneal Dialysis (CCPD) is an option that can allow a patient to perform dialysis treatment at night while sleeping. This form of peritoneal dialysis (PD) uses a cycler (machine) to run the fluid bags (dialysate) through the patient's peritoneal cavity. The patient sets up the machine and connects his/her PD catheter to the cycler before bed. The cycler will complete the treatment by morning.

The PD patient can also choose to perform Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD). This type of PD requires several manual fluid exchanges throughout the day. There is no cycler involved. Both forms of PD offer the patient the opportunity to arrange their schedules to meet their work, family, travel needs and fit dialysis into their daily routine.

Home hemodialysis is another option that offers patients to opportunity to gain more control of their treatments. This option for home dialysis generally requires a partner who is trained with the patient to conduct hemodialysis in the home. The patient and the partner need to train with a home dialysis program for several weeks/months to ensure they can safely conduct hemodialysis in the patient's home. Some home hemodialysis machines are small and can fit on a tabletop. They have cartridges for the lines and filter, and small containers for the water and dialysate. There is no need for special plumbing or electrical to run these machines.

What should a patient consider before choosing a home dialysis modality?

When a patient is first diagnosed with Stage 5 CKD and told they need dialysis, they are often overwhelmed and don't know what questions to ask their nephrologist.

They may be placed on hemodialysis on an emergency basis as they had not known about their kidney disease before they got sick. These patients will often face the changes brought on by dialysis after they are discharged from the hospital. It's at that time that the dialysis team at their out-patient facility will provide education about home dialysis.

The newly diagnosed Stage 5 CKD patient will need to evaluate their life and determine whether they are willing to make the changes necessary to implement home dialysis. Can I take the time to train for home dialysis at a home training facility? Do I have the room in my house for PD supplies? Do I have a room available to set up a hemodialysis machine? Do I have a partner who can be committed to a home dialysis treatment schedule?

Each of these questions needs to be answered before you can commit to home dialysis. Once the decision is made, the home dialysis facility that will train you can go over the issues you will need to address to be a successful home dialysis patient. **The benefits can often outweigh the challenges.** Increased freedom to schedule your treatments, no need to go to an out-patient hemodialysis facility three times per week are just two of the benefits of the home dialysis option. Talk with your nephrologist and current treatment team if you are interested; remember, there's no place like home!

Minutes to Happiness

by Eileen Moloney

Jane H. Booker Dialysis: JSUMC Dialysis Unit

Choose a thought each day and adopt it as your own, at least for the day. Consider how you can apply it to your life; possibly turning a negative to a positive. Jot down how you might use it and keep it in mind during the day.

- Notice the small wonders....the sunshine....the cloud formations....a bird in flight. Give thanks for such joys.
- Look around you and note the everyday things that have significant meaning because of the person who gave it to you and the joy that it brings in remembering.
- Take time to “smell the roses” (even if they aren’t present). Studies show that being around plants and flowers can relieve stress, soothe sadness and increase calmness.
- Be kind to yourself. Treat yourself to something special.
- Call a friend or send a note to someone. Let them know how much you appreciate the times you have shared.
- Reflect on something or someone who made you smile this week. Return the favor to someone else.
- Attempt to recall some negatives that entered your life this week. Put them in perspective. Did they have a devastating or lasting effect on you? Were you able to turn them into positives? If not, maybe you can react differently the next time someone brings negativity into your life.

Before going to bed, reflect on the day and see how you were able to turn negatives into positives. Be grateful for the small things. SLEEP WELL!

To file a Grievance Regarding your Dialysis Care please contact:

QIRN3
Cranbury Gates Office Park
109 South Main Street, Suite 21
Cranbury, NJ 08512
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Fax: 609-490-0835
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Flu Season is Approaching Remember to get Vaccinated by October!

Flu season is fast approaching. How can you protect yourself from the serious side effects of the flu? A vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and prevent catching the flu. Other ways to protect yourself include frequent hand washing and the use of anti-bacterial hand sanitizers. Not touching your mouth, eyes and nose can also help prevent the spread of germs into your body.

The flu vaccine is available at your dialysis center as well as your primary care physician’s office. You can also get the vaccine at many local pharmacies. The important thing is not where you get it but that you get it as early in the flu season as possible. Medicare covers the cost of the flu vaccine so cost should not be an issue for most dialysis patients. If you have private insurance, most plans also cover the vaccine. Check with your insurance carrier if you have any questions.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend annual flu vaccination for all individuals 6 months of age or older and especially for anyone with a chronic medical condition such as renal disease. Renal patients should receive the flu shot or the inactivated influenza vaccine. Do not take the live attenuated nasal vaccine (nasal spray) as it could cause serious side-effects.

The flu can be very dangerous to a renal patient due to serious complications such as pneumonia. The best way to ensure your well-being and prevent the flu not only for yourself but for your family is to get vaccinated. Remember the old saying: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

JOIN THE PAC TODAY!



The Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) for QIRN3 consists of dialysis patients and those who have received transplants. The committee meets quarterly 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.