

Choices

Making your treatment decision

Class Goals

1. **List the 3 main options to supplement or replace kidney function.**
2. **Review steps for each of the main kidney replacement options.**
3. **Review pros and cons of each option. Think about their effects on your own situation and lifestyle.**
4. **Talk with your own healthcare provider about your treatment options.**

Overview

You have learned about the treatment options to supplement or replace failing kidney function.

This section of your notebook details pros and cons of each treatment choice. The worksheet-style pages provide a way for making your own treatment decisions.

How do you define “quality of life”?

- The definition of “quality of life” is unique for each person and family.
- Big life changes make us think deeply about what it is that creates a decent quality of life for us and our families.
- We all must have reasonable quality of life to be able to adapt well to changes.
- Some “give and take” is part of life. But, some issues cannot be compromised. You must have these things to be satisfied with your own quality of life.



The definition of “quality of life” is different for each person and each family.

My Thoughts

Reviewing Your Treatment Options

Hemodialysis

- Cleans blood using an artificial kidney system.
- Most times, 3 treatments a week (home dialysis is 5 to 7 treatments a week).
- Each treatment lasts 3 to 5 hours (each daily short home dialysis treatment lasts 2 to 3 hours).
- Surgery is needed to create a blood access to provide enough blood flow for repeated use.
- Treatments can be done at a center or at home.

Hemodialysis Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
• Most effective form of dialysis • Dialysis prescription can be changed to improve blood cleaning • Set times for treatment • “Days off” when no treatment scheduled	• Needle inserted at each treatment • Fluid intake often limited between treatments • Foods high in potassium, sodium, and phosphorus limited • Not portable • Surgeries and procedures may be needed to keep blood access working

In-Center Hemodialysis Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
• Support staff there • Separate from your home • Care is provided to you • More social, able to meet with others	• Travel time • Transportation to center • Little flexibility in treatment schedule • Less private • Less time with family

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with ten horizontal dashed gray lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Type 1: Daily Short Home Hemodialysis Pros and Cons

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Type 2: Nocturnal Home Hemodialysis Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
• No travel to the dialysis center • A sense of independence and control over your treatment • At home where you are comfortable and with your family • Fewer limits on fluids and foods • Need fewer medicines • Fistula may last longer • Equipment is portable (you can take it with you) • Gives the most time on dialysis, which can lead to a longer life	• Need space to store the machine and supplies at home • Need special training • May need a helper • No professionals at home • May add stress to you and your family • Sleep may be disturbed

My Thoughts

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Peritoneal Dialysis

- Cleans blood by drawing wastes from small blood vessels into the fluid you put in your belly.
- Done every day, 24 hours a day.
- Belly catheter needed to get dialysis fluid in and out.
- Treatments done at home or work.

Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
• Portable – no machine needed for continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD) • Some flexibility in treatment times • Greater self-care and independence • No needles • Fewer limits on fluids and foods • No big swings in how you feel • May keep your own kidneys working longer	• Risk of being “under-dialyzed,” depending on size and condition of belly membrane • High, constant risk of infection • High level of personal responsibility • Need enough strength, good eyesight, and ability to work with small pieces of equipment • No days off • Supplies take up space • Can absorb calories from PD fluid • Can lose protein into the PD fluid

My Thoughts

Peritoneal Dialysis: 2 Types

Type 1: CAPD (Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis)

- 4 to 5 exchanges done each day without a machine.
- Each exchange is 2 to 3 liters (about 2 to 3 quarts).
- Each exchange takes 30 to 45 minutes.

Pros and Cons of CAPD

PROS	CONS
• Portable • No machine needed • Do on your own schedule • Private and independent	• High infection risk • Technique must be careful and consistent • High level of personal responsibility • Changes in how your body looks and its size • Daily catheter care • No hot tubs or baths, limits on swimming • Fluid in belly takes up space, causes pressure, making you feel more full after eating • Risk for hernia

Type 2: CCPD (Continuous Cycling Peritoneal Dialysis)

- Done each night at home with a cycler machine.
- Exchanges occur at night while you sleep.
- Each treatment takes 9 to 11 hours.

Pros and Cons of CCPD

PROS	CONS
• Daytime hours are mostly free • Lower risk for infection • Can be done by self or with a helper • Good choice for medically fragile people	• Machine needed • Takes time – 9 to 11 hours every night • Alarms can disturb your sleep • 1 or 2 daytime CAPD exchanges sometimes needed • No “nights off” – treatment done all night, 7 days a week

My Thoughts

Kidney Transplant

- Surgery is done to connect a kidney from a donor to your blood system and bladder.
- A donor kidney replaces your damaged kidney. It makes urine, cleans blood, builds bones, and makes hormones for red blood cell production.
- The new kidney can be donated from a relative, friend, or someone you do not know. Or, it can come from a deceased organ donor (cadaveric).
- Medicines are needed as long as the kidney is in your body to prevent infection and rejection of the new kidney.
- Most times, there is no need to take out your own kidneys.

Pros and Cons of Kidney Transplant

PROS	CONS
• Works like your own kidney • You have more energy • No dialysis needed • Far fewer limits on fluids and foods	• Transplant may not work – there is always a risk of rejection • Risk of infection • Lots of medicines to take • Many possible side effects from the medicines, including changes in body appearance • At first, many clinic visits and blood draws needed

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Treatment Choices Worksheet

STEP 1: My Priorities How do I rank these 19 items, in order of their importance to me?		STEP 2: On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest:				
		Hemodialysis How well does hemodialysis meet my needs?		Peritoneal Dialysis How well does peritoneal dialysis meet my needs?		Kidney Transplant How well does kidney transplant meet my needs?
Rank	Items	Home	Center	CAPD	CCPD	
	1. Effectiveness					
	2. Meets my schedule					
	3. Flexibility in timing					
	4. Day “off”					
	5. Time with family					
	6. Travel needed					
	7. Self-care					
	8. Separate from home life					
	9. Done by others					
	10. Staff support					
	11. Social aspect					
	12. Fewer limits on foods					
	13. Fewer limits on fluids					
	14. No needles					
	15. Space at home					
	16. Infection risk					
	17. Tub bath/swim					
	18. Lots of medicines					
	19. Frequent blood draws and visits					

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Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.
