

Kidneys Failing?

YOU HAVE OPTIONS

Kidney Transplant

A kidney transplant is a treatment option and will not cure your kidney disease. This is a surgical procedure that places a healthy kidney from another person into your body. With some medical conditions, transplant is not an option. Your physician will refer you to a transplant center for testing to decide if a transplant is the best treatment option for you

Peritoneal Dialysis

Peritoneal dialysis uses your abdominal lining (peritoneum) as the filter to rid your blood of waste. A special fluid is put into your abdomen where it draws out water and waste through the peritoneum. This fluid is later drained out and replaced with fresh fluid. Treatments, called exchanges, are done daily or nightly at home.

Hemodialysis

Hemodialysis uses an “artificial kidney” machine to pump your blood through a filter that takes out water and waste. Treatments are usually done 3 times a week at a dialysis clinic or at home. One treatment usually takes about 3 to 4 hours.

Choose Not To Be Treated

Treatments for kidney failure exist, however you may wish not to be treated. It is important to understand that if you choose not to have any treatment, you will experience serious complications, including death. You will be able to stay in the comfort of your home, or choose to go to a hospital, hospice or nursing home until you pass away.

Options provided by:

Sanford Transplant Center

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Kidneys Failing? **You have Options**

What can be done if my kidneys fail?

You will have to take medicine, eat a special diet, and replace the filtering job of your kidneys. This can be done through a kidney transplant or dialysis.

Kidney Transplant

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Advantages

- feels closest to having normal kidney function
- no dialysis treatments required
- lets you maintain a normal schedule and visit a clinic less often
- fewer fluid and diet restrictions
- feel healthier and have more energy
- work full-time without worrying about a dialysis schedule

Disadvantages

- the stress of waiting for a match
- risks associated with major surgery
- risk of rejection – your transplant may not last a lifetime
- adhere to a strict medications schedule – which can have side effects including possible changes in your appearance
- you are more susceptible to illness

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Advantages

- fit your treatment around your lifestyle
- independence – perform therapy yourself
- several options for doing exchanges
- fewer fluid or diet restrictions than hemodialysis
- fewer visits to the dialysis unit than hemodialysis (usually once a month)
- no needles
- better blood pressure control
- continuous therapy is gentler and more like your natural kidney function than hemodialysis
- portable and flexible when you travel

Disadvantages

- exchanges need to be made daily
- permanent catheter
- risk of infection
- weight gain
- storage space for supplies required in your home

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Advantages

- regular contact with other hemodialysis patients and staff
- 3 treatments per week (4 days off)
- no need for keeping equipment/supplies at home
- immediate access to medical help during therapy

Disadvantages

- travel to center/unit 3 times a week on fixed schedule
- need a permanent access, usually in your arm
- insertion of 2 needles for each treatment
- restricted diet/limited fluid intake
- possible discomfort such as headache, nausea, leg cramps, tiredness