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## NOW THAT YOU'RE ON DIALYSIS...

Welcome to the Fraser Health Kidney Dialysis Unit. Now that you are on dialysis, you might have some questions about it. Our team is here to help you. Here are some frequently asked questions.

### YOUR DIALYSIS RUN – WHAT TO EXPECT

#### BEFORE DIALYSIS...

##### Bring with you:



Medications

Earphones for the TV



Reading Material



Knitting



– OR –

Something to keep you occupied

**DO NOT BRING VALUABLES.** You might want a sweater or blanket, as many kidney patients feel cold even when the temperature is normal. Wear loose, comfortable clothes.

#### WHEN YOU GET TO THE UNIT...



Get a blanket

Get ice if you want it

Weigh yourself



Go to the washroom if you need to

## DURING DIALYSIS...

- **Can I eat while I'm on dialysis?**



We don't recommend a big meal while you are on dialysis, but a light snack is OK. We cannot provide food, so you need to bring food if you think you might be hungry. **If you need to eat regularly because of diabetes or another reason, it is VERY important that you bring your own food.**



- **Can I drink while I'm on dialysis?**

You need to be careful about how much you drink, because your kidneys cannot take care of the extra fluid. Ask your nurse or the dietitian.

- **Can my family visit me while I'm dialyzing?**



Yes. You can have visitors. They will need to wait in the waiting room while you are put on dialysis, and wait again while you are taken off.

- **Can I watch TV?**



Most dialysis stations have TV. We cannot always guarantee you will have a station with TV.

- **Will you keep my spot if I go on vacation?**

Yes, but you will need to make your own arrangements for dialysis at your vacation destination.

## AFTER DIALYSIS...

- Don't plan anything — you might feel very tired.
- The first few times, don't drive yourself.
- Read about how to care for your arm or ask the nurse.
- Tell the nurses how you feel — are you light-headed? Dizzy? Nauseated?



## HOW WILL I FEEL AFTER MY DIALYSIS?

You may feel tired and have less energy. Everyone is different.

- Listen to your body.
- Adjust your daily routines and plan ahead.
- Do work in short spurts and rest in between.
- Plan activities on your days off.
- You will figure out what works for you.

- **Do I have to come three times a week?**

Most people need three times a week for the dialysis to make you feel better.

- **My schedule is a problem for me. Can I dialyse on a different schedule?**

Please ask the nurse or social worker to help you with finding a new schedule. We try to put people on the schedule they want, but we cannot guarantee it.

- **Can I have the same bed or chair every time?**

We cannot guarantee the same station. As you get better, we may ask you to go to one of the community clinics. You may have to wait on a waiting list for a spot in the community clinic.



## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING



- **Parking is expensive and hard to find. Do you offer parking passes?**

Yes. Please ask one of the team and we will get you a parking pass.

- **Does the program have transportation options?**

HandyDart is available to patients. Your Social Worker can help you register. HandyDart sometimes cannot manage all your transportation needs. If you need help, speak to your social worker.

### IF YOU FEEL SICK....



- **What happens if I feel sick? Should I stay home?**

**NO**. It is important to come to all your runs. Feeling sick might mean you really need your dialysis. Tell your nurse if you feel sick.

- **If I skip a dialysis run, what will happen?**

You might have problems if you skip a run. You could become quite ill if you skip runs, so we do not recommend it. If you need to change the time of a run, please talk to your nurse about it.

- **If I feel sick during or after a dialysis run, what will happen?**

Your nurse will help you. If you become very sick, you might have to stay late on the dialysis unit so the doctors and nurses can take care of you. You might need to go to the Emergency room or the main hospital.

- **If I have to come to the hospital for some reason, will I still get dialysis here?**

Yes. You will get dialysis here on the renal unit or in your hospital room.



## HOW LONG BEFORE I FEEL BETTER?

It takes time to feel better. Some people feel better right away, while others take a few weeks to months.

Things that you can do to help yourself feel better:

- Continue taking your medications – there may have been some changes.
- You may need to make some diet changes.
- Let staff know how you are feeling.
- Stay active – as you do less, your body becomes weaker and it takes longer to get better. Plan an activity every day.
- As you pee less, you must drink less – check your fluids.



## FINANCIAL ISSUES

- **I am on a lot of pills and they're very expensive. Are they covered?**

Most pills are covered. Your social worker or the pharmacist may be able to help you find help paying for your pills.

- **I'm having money problems because of my illness. Can someone help?**

Ask your social worker for help. The social worker will see if you qualify for government assistance.



## WHO CAN HELP ME?

- **Will I see a kidney doctor here?**

Yes. A kidney doctor will see you during your dialysis run most days. It won't always be the same doctor, but all the doctors will know about your case.

- **How do you monitor my medical situation?**

The doctors and nurses will see you and look at your blood lab results regularly.

- **Is there someone who can help me understand all the medications I have to take?**

We have a pharmacist who is especially trained to deal with medications. Ask your nurse if you'd like to see the pharmacist.

- **If I feel sad or worried or upset, is there someone I can talk to?**

We have social workers and a psychiatrist available to help you with problems you have coping with the changes in your life on dialysis. You can also speak to someone already on dialysis if you want.

- **I need to talk to someone about my diet.**

We have a dietitian assigned to you. The dietitian will meet with you and help you manage healthy eating.

### CONTACT

My home unit is \_\_\_\_\_

The phone number is \_\_\_\_\_