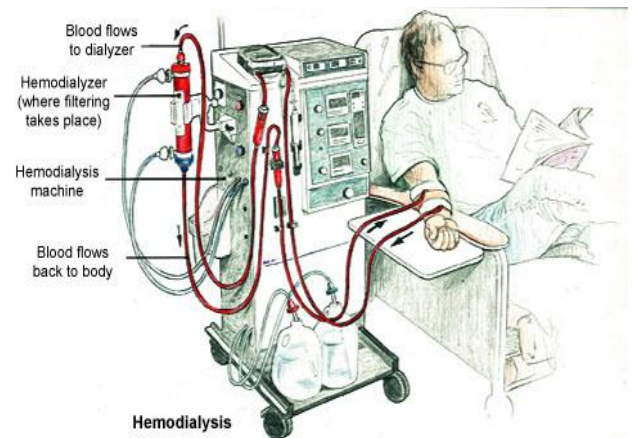


Dialysis Treatment Options: In-center Hemodialysis (HD)

If your kidneys are not working well and you have end-stage renal disease (ESRD), hemodialysis is one treatment option. Dialysis is a process of removing the wastes and excess fluid from your blood that your kidneys can no longer remove. Hemodialysis is one type of dialysis treatment.

What is Hemodialysis?

Hemodialysis uses a machine that pumps your blood through a dialyzer or artificial kidney. An artificial kidney is a membrane that cleans your blood of the waste products. You will lie back in a chair during your treatment. In order to get dialysis, you will need an access. An access is a way to get to your blood and can be a fistula, graft or catheter. (Refer to the document, "What is a Vascular Access" for more information.) Two tubings will be put into your arm, chest or leg, one tube will take the blood with waste from your body to the machine while the other tube will take the clean blood from the machine and return it to your body. Most people have treatments three times per week for about 4 hours. You will be weighed before and after each treatment to find out how much extra fluid was taken from your body during the treatment. Your weight after a treatment is called the "dry" or "target weight". You should know your dry weight.



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There are different kinds of hemodialysis. In-center hemodialysis is done in a special clinic called a dialysis unit. Treatments are done three times per week, either Monday, Wednesday, and Friday or Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at a specific time. Hemodialysis can also be done a night at some dialysis units (called nocturnal or night

time dialysis) or in your home (called home hemodialysis). Talk to your health care provider about which kind of dialysis would be best for you.

Are there are problems that can occur with hemodialysis?

#1: Blood clots

A major problem of hemodialysis is blood clots. Blood clots are clumps of blood that can block your access. If an access is blocked, you will need to have a something done to remove the clots.

#2: Infection

An access can become infected. To greatly decrease the chances of an infection, the skin over or around the access must be cleaned before it is used. Redness, tenderness, drainage, fever and chills could be signs of an infection. If you have any one of these signs, you should report them to your dialysis center right away.

#3: Symptoms

During a hemodialysis treatment, your body will lose fluid and other substances. If the fluid and substances are removed too quickly or too much, you may feel light-headed, sweat, have nausea, develop leg cramps and/or headaches. If any of these symptoms occur, please tell the dialysis staff. Your dialysis can be changed to lessen and/or avoid these symptoms.

How will hemodialysis affect your daily life?

You will mostly likely have to limit your salt and fluid intake, and foods high in sodium, potassium and phosphorus. It will be very important for you to plan for your meals in order to make sure you have enough nutrition. Prepackaged, processed and fast foods contain too much sodium and phosphorus and should not be eaten very often.

Since dialysis treatments are scheduled, you will need to work your other activities around your dialysis treatments. Having regularly scheduled treatments three times per week makes working outside the home while on hemodialysis difficult but not impossible.

What are some of the possible gains and problems of in-center hemodialysis?

Possible Gains	Potential Problems
Nurses or technicians do the treatment for you	Need to travel to and from the dialysis center three times per week
Routine contact with dialysis staff	Dialysis treatments done on a fixed schedule
Contact with other people on dialysis	Must plan for vacations; need to schedule treatments in advance where you are traveling to
No need to keep equipment or supplies at home as compared to other types of dialysis	May feel tired, especially just after a dialysis treatment. Many people go home and take a nap.
Three treatments per week; 4 days off	Need to eat less salt, less of some foods and drink less liquids
Help is present during a treatment, if needed	Risk of infection
	Possible discomfort during a treatment such as light-headedness or headache
	Place two needles in your arm before each treatment