

# Preparing for Peritoneal Dialysis

"If you have selected peritoneal dialysis as a treatment option for your kidney disease, this information sheet helps you prepare to begin peritoneal dialysis."

## Catheter Surgery

To prepare for peritoneal dialysis (PD), a minor simple outpatient surgical procedure is performed to insert a small flexible tube, the size of a straw, called a catheter into the patient's abdomen, near the navel. The catheter allows the dialysate fluid (a specially formulated fluid designed to draw the toxins and extra fluid from your bloodstream) to flow into and out of your body. The procedure is usually completed several weeks before your dialysis treatment begins to allow the catheter exit site to heal before the catheter is used.

## Working with Your Dietitian

You will need to work with a dietitian to make sure you get the right balance of nutrients. Your diet pre-dialysis may be different once you start on peritoneal dialysis. Your dietitian will work closely with you on these changes. For example, you may need to watch your salt (sodium), potassium, phosphorus and protein intake, as well as your fluid intake.

The dietitian will recommend a diet and fluid intake that is best for you. You will find your diet to be more liberal on peritoneal dialysis than with other treatment choices. Remember, what's best for someone else with kidney disease may not be right for you.

## Maintenance Care

In addition to watching your diet and fluid intake, there are several other important care steps you will need to maintain, including:

- Blood pressure monitoring
- Body weight monitoring
- Catheter exit site cleaning and monitoring
- Following your care team's directions to prevent complications

## Working with Your Care Team

Peritoneal dialysis provides a great deal of freedom and independence. Even though you are performing your dialysis treatments yourself, you are not alone. Your care team will work closely with you both during and after training. It's important to work with your care team to make sure that you stay on track, make the most of your dialysis and enjoy the best quality of life. Your kidney doctor (nephrologist), dialysis nurse, dietitian and social worker are all there to support you. Your immediate family or perhaps your closest friends are also an important part of your care team. In addition to providing support, they may be able to help with your schedule and your responsibilities so that you can find the right sense of balance in your life and live your life to the fullest.

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### Managing Supplies

Your dialysis care team will help you figure out the best way to organize your supplies at home and manage your supply orders. Most of your supplies will be delivered directly to your home. Many insurance plans cover the cost of your supplies. Be sure to ask your insurance specialist. Over time, you will find what works best for you. For example, you may want to keep some extra supplies at a friend or family member’s home that you visit frequently throughout the week to cut down on the supplies you need to carry with you.

### Adjusting Your Routine

The type of PD that best suits your lifestyle—continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD) or continuous cycling peritoneal dialysis (CCPD)—will help determine your treatment schedule. You and your doctor will decide how to tailor the therapy to best fit your needs based on your current lifestyle, physical abilities and life goals. It’s important to follow your therapy schedule to feel the best and make the most of your dialysis treatments. It’s also important to keep up with your commitments to work, family and yourself to enjoy the best quality of life. Fitting your therapy into your life is a goal for home dialysis.