

Nursing Home Staff Education

How to Care for Hemodialysis Patients Outside of Dialysis

Caring for patients that are on dialysis is very complex. It is imperative to be knowledgeable on the specific needs that these patients have to ensure proper care is being provided.



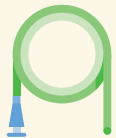
Medications

- There are a lot of medications to keep track of, many of which are time-sensitive and require a strict schedule, such as phosphorus binders.
- Do not administer any over-the-counter medicines and natural health products without talking to the doctor first, as the patients' kidneys are not functioning at a normal level, and they could be adversely affected by these medications.
- Do not administer ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), or similar medications, unless otherwise instructed by the doctor. These medications may cause bleeding.
- You may be asked to hold all blood pressure medications on dialysis days prior to dialysis, as the treatment could lower the patients' blood pressure to an unsafe level during their treatment.



Diet and Fluid Intake

- Discuss important dietary details with the dialysis dietitian.
- Patients will need to limit fluids and certain foods that contain salt (sodium), potassium, and phosphorus.
- Patients should follow a renal diet.
- Patients may need higher levels of protein in their diet.
- Patients will need to take phosphorus binders with their meals and snacks.



Dialysis Access

Hemodialysis Catheters

- Keep the catheter dressing clean and dry. If the dressing comes off or gets soiled, please call the dialysis care team.
- Never remove the cap on the end of the catheter. Air must not enter the catheter. If the cap comes off, please contact the dialysis care team.
- Avoid letting the catheter or catheter site go underwater during a bath or shower. This would increase the chance of moisture getting near the catheter site, which can cause infection.
- The caps and clamps of the catheter should be kept tightly closed when not being used for dialysis. Only the dialysis care team should use the dialysis catheter to draw blood or to give medications or fluids.
- If the area around the catheter feels sore or looks red, call the dialysis care team at once. Ask the dialysis care team about signs and symptoms that require immediate attention.



Dialysis Access Home Hemodialysis (HHD): AV Fistula or Graft

- Keep the access clean and watch for swelling, redness, drainage, or tenderness in the area.
- Avoid trauma to the area. Injuries to the access or access arm can be life-threatening.
- Use the following guidelines to prevent the patients' access from clotting:
 - They should not wear tight watches, bracelets, or tight clothing on the access arm.
 - They should avoid sleeping on the access.
 - They should not do any heavy lifting or rest purses or bags on the access area.
 - Avoid blood draws in the access arm.
 - Do not allow blood pressure to be taken on the access arm.
 - Avoid IV insertion in the access arm.
- Remove the dressing within four hours after the dialysis treatment has ended to ensure it does not damage the access.
- Call the dialysis care team if you notice any changes in the patients' access or if the patients complain of any pain or discomfort with their dialysis access.
- If the access starts bleeding, use gauze and apply pressure to the access site and call the dialysis care team for further instructions.
- Have emergency contact information available.



Vitals and Labs

- Make sure to monitor vital signs, including weight, daily—especially on dialysis days—and communicate results to the dialysis care team.
- If you draw any new labs, make sure to send a copy or communicate lab results to the dialysis care team.



Dialysis Team Communication

- Contact the dialysis care team if patients:
 - Go to the hospital for any reason.
 - Require a blood transfusion.
 - Have the signs and symptoms of a catheter or access infection.
 - Suffer a fall.

Your Dialysis Care Team's Contact Information

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____