

Home Dialysis: Real Talk by Real Patients

Home dialysis patients were recently asked questions about their experience with home dialysis. Here are their real and unfiltered answers to those questions. If you would like to learn more about home dialysis, please reach out to the staff at your dialysis center and let them know.

Q

Top Reason(s) I Wanted to Do Home Dialysis

A

“My doctor thought it would be better for my health and because I was so active and young at the time. He thought that it would fit better with my schedule. Also, I was having horrible headaches on dialysis and the slower rate and more often helped take those away.”

- Sue G.

“It allowed me the freedom to choose the treatment times that worked best around my schedule - I volunteer a lot and the flexibility provided by home dialysis works out best for me.”

- Allen W.

“The freedom of making my own schedule for treatment and working my treatments into my life instead of scheduling my life around my treatments.”

- Jennifer D.

“It frees up my time. I hook up at bedtime and disconnect in the morning. I am well rested and feel good all day. Much different and better than hemodialysis.”

- Teddy A.

Q

What does doing dialysis at home allow me to do that I could not do when receiving dialysis in center?

A

“Keep my job as a teacher and stay out of the hospital more.”

- Sue G.

“Continue my volunteer work without impact, schedule doctor appointments and enjoy my time with my family and grandkids because of the time flexibility to do my treatments.”

- Allen W.

“I feel better and live almost a normal life.”

- Jennifer D.

“Be much more active and be able to maintain my farm and livestock.”

- Teddy A.

Q

One thing I was scared of/worried about that turned out to be ok once I started home dialysis is...

A

"Can I do it myself? There are still days I struggle with this. Even putting needles in, it is all on me, no one is there to help me. When a nurse has trouble, they can ask for help. No one is there to help me."

- Sue G.

"What if I wasn't able to set the machine up properly? After two weeks of training, I started doing home treatments. I followed the step by step for about two weeks, then started to gain confidence. Now I can set up in minimal time and never have to refer to the guide, because I have been doing this for over a year. I also have been able to work through error codes and machine problems using the guidebook or by contacting customer support, no problem."

- Allen W.

"At first, I was worried about sticking myself with the needles, but with practice, the encouragement and support of my dialysis nurse, and the use of buttonholes that fear and worry went away quickly."

- Jennifer D.

"It is a big responsibility to take on that much of your health care. But staff is really supportive and makes this as easy as possible."

- Teddy A.

Q

If you could give encouragement to someone who is unsure if they want to try dialysis at home, you would say...

A

"Home dialysis is not for everyone. That being said, if you like your freedom for your schedule and want privacy, this is a really good option."

- Sue G.

"It is almost overwhelming when you are first told your kidneys have failed and you are going to dialysis for the REST OF YOUR LIFE. Hang in there. While it doesn't go away, it does get better. I led a very active lifestyle until about one year ago when my kidneys failed. Now, I am not as active but have learned to cope and accept the new reality. I wish that a new patient could talk to someone who has been through this transition recently, like myself, and voice your concerns and fears. Everyone approaches a major change like this differently. There are still days when I am depressed about being hooked to a machine for eight hours five times a week. Seek out and speak to someone like me who has been there and can help you get through the rough spots when you really feel down about this process."

- Allen W.

“Try it!!! The unknown of how home dialysis will work for you will be answered through the support and knowledge of training with your dialysis nurse.”

- Jennifer D.

“You will find it is much easier, safer, and rewarding than you can envision.”

- Teddy A.

Q

Anything else you want to add about your choice to do home dialysis?

A

“I do think sometimes the medical field tries to push some to do home and they are just not really sure about dialysis at all. To me, if they are unsure, in-center may be better to start. I am very glad I got to do both. That way I was more educated to make that decision. I would never go back to in-center, but I do understand home dialysis takes a lot of dedication and work.”

- Sue G.

“With my heart issues, home dialysis was the best option for me and put the least strain on my heart. It fit into my schedule really well with minimal disruptions. I keep my days free as much as possible and do treatments late afternoon into the evening hours, or sometimes overnight while sleeping, depending on all factors considered.”

- Allen W.

“This is my second time doing home hemodialysis treatments, and I am thankful for the option!”

- Jennifer D.

“This is much easier and comfortable than having large needles inserted into a fistula.”

- Teddy A.

For more information or to file a grievance, please contact:

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