Home Hemodialysis



More and more people are choosing to do their own hemodialysis at home. Home dialysis machines are smaller and easier to use, making home hemodialysis (home hemo) more doable. Instead of having to be at the dialysis center 3 times a week for 3 to 4 hours, people are able to do shorter, more frequent treatments at home. People who do home hemo say it improves their quality of life and that they have more energy, feel less nauseous, sleep better and take fewer medications. They also say it gives them more control over their care by doing their own treatments and it gives them more flexibility with their dialysis schedule. Your doctor and care team can help you decide if home hemodialysis is right for you.

What Do I Need to Be Able to Do Home Hemodialysis?

- A helper, which can be a family member, neighbor, or close friend
  - Your helper must be willing and able to be with you for every home treatment
- Training for both you and your helper
- Takes 4 to 8 weeks
  - Your care team will make sure you feel comfortable with each step before you start
- A dialysis machine
  - The clinic will give you a machine, you do not have to buy one.
  - Special wiring or plumbing changes may be needed, but most use regular outlets
- Space for the dialysis machine and supplies
- Electricity and water supplies
- Dialysis supplies, which will be delivered to your home once or twice a month

During Training, Learn How To:

- Order supplies
- Clean the equipment and the room where dialysis is done
- Set up supplies and equipment
- Check your blood pressure, pulse, weight and temperature
- Do your own needle sticks
- Get blood samples
- Fill out your treatment sheets
- Troubleshoot problems
- Handle emergencies

After Training:

- Someone from the dialysis clinic will be available to answer phone calls 24-hours a day
- You will need to visit the clinic once a month
- You will see your doctor, the dialysis nurse, dietitian and social worker
- A blood sample may be tested to make sure the hemodialysis treatments are working and to find any problems

Advantages

- Dialyze in the comfort of your own home
- Control of when you do dialysis
- Frees you up for other activities (hobbies, work, family)
- No more traveling to the clinic three times a week
- May be easier to travel (depending upon type of dialysis machine)
- Not as “wiped out” or tired after treatments
- Waste and fluid do not build up as much in the body between treatments
- May have less muscle cramping
- May have better blood pressure control with fewer drugs
- Better control of phosphate levels in the blood
- Fewer food and fluid restrictions
- Less contact with potential germs than in-center
- May reduce hospitalizations

Disadvantages

- Not all clinics have home hemo services, so the nearest home hemo clinic may be 1-2 hours away.
- Training is required
- May need a helper. In some cases, patients may be able to do home hemo without a care partner
- Adequate storage space
- Machines can be heavy (weighing 75 lbs or more depending upon the type)

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

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Memphis, TN 38125
Network 16: 800-456-6919
Network 17: 800-444-9965

What I Need to Tell My Care Team

As the main person in charge of your home hemo treatment, you need to be alert and tell your doctor and nurse if you notice you have:

- Low blood pressure
- Weight gain
- Signs of infection (fever, redness and/or drainage from needle site)

Resources

- Match-D | homedialysis.org/match-d
- Home Dialysis Central website | homedialysis.org

Ask Your Care Team:

- What do I need to get started with home hemodialysis?
- How long is the training?
- How much space will I need?
- How often do I need to see my doctor?
- Will my insurance cover home hemodialysis?

Qsource ESRD Networks

esrd.qsource.org

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