



Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
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www.lifeoptions.org

Q: Why is exercise important for me?

A: Exercise is needed by *everyone*. It helps keep your muscles strong, your heart healthy, blood sugar and fats under control, and may even lift your mood and help fight depression.

The bottom line is that being active on a regular basis will help keep your body working well for a long time. Not being active will leave you less able to do the things you have to do in your daily life. Exercise means being physically active. It does not have to be working out hard at a gym or lifting weights or running.

Some activities you may like might be:

- Walking
- Gardening
- Dancing
- Bowling
- Tai Chi
- Yoga
- Climbing stairs
- Grocery shopping
- Sweeping or vacuuming
- Making beds
- Mowing the lawn
- Washing the car

After you get your doctor's okay, work toward moving for 30 minutes each day. Take small steps to get there and break up

the 30 minutes into 5- or 10-minute segments if you need to. The longer you can do the activity, the easier it will become to make it a part of your daily life. When your body gets into a routine of activity, you will feel better and have more energy to do what you want and need to do.

What I can do to get more exercise:

- Download and read *Exercise: A Guide for People on Dialysis* at www.lifeoptions.org.
- Decide on an activity to try. It should be something I like that is convenient for me to do. I may choose a few activities to do and switch off.
- Find a buddy to exercise with, so we can motivate each other.
- Start with a few minutes of my activity at first, and slowly work up to 30 minutes a day.
- Reward myself for meeting my exercise goals with a magazine, movie, flowers, or other non-food treat.
- Figure out what it will take to motivate myself to stay with an activity. Make a plan of rewards, track my progress, use a support system, or a trainer... whatever it takes for me to keep at it and have fun.
- Visit module 12 of Kidney School™: *Staying Active with Kidney Disease* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.