



# Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program

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[www.lifeoptions.org](http://www.lifeoptions.org)

## Q: What kinds of exercise can I do safely?

**A:** Most people—at any age—can do some kind of exercise. Before starting an exercise program, talk with your doctor. He or she may have you work with a physical therapist or a rehab expert, who can teach you:

- How to tell if you're exercising at the right level
- To stop or change your activity if you have any discomfort
- To plan your session to include a warm up, an activity time, and a cool down
- How to do exercises that will make your muscles stronger, make you more flexible, and build your endurance

Some things your doctor may talk with you about before you exercise include:

- **Heart disease:** You may need a cardiac work-up or cardiac rehab.
- **Bone disease:** This may limit your ability to lift weights or jog.
- **Neuropathy:** Wear shoes that fit when walking or jogging and use water shoes during water exercise.
- **Diabetes:** Check your blood sugar before you exercise. Exercise can cause your blood sugar to drop fast. You may need to change your meal or insulin times before exercise.

- **Hemodialysis:** Don't exercise too hard right after dialysis and don't squeeze your access.
- **CAPD:** If you find that you're not comfortable doing exercise when full, exercise after a drain, before you fill again.

### What *I* can do to exercise safely:

- Share my health history when I talk with my doctor about exercise.
- Ask my doctor to suggest safe exercises I can do or refer me to a physical therapist.
- Download and read Exercise: *A Guide for People on Dialysis* at [www.lifeoptions.org](http://www.lifeoptions.org).
- Learn how I feel when I exercise and how to exercise within my limits.
- Find a buddy to exercise with and/or figure out a way to work regular activity into my daily life.
- Visit module 12 of Kidney School™: *Staying Active with Kidney Disease* at [www.kidneyschool.org](http://www.kidneyschool.org) to learn more.