



Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
414 D'Onofrio Drive, Ste. 200
Madison, WI 53719
www.lifeoptions.org

Q: When will my life start to seem “normal” again?

A: When you start dialysis, you may think you'll never feel “normal” again. But you will. When you've been on dialysis a month or so, you'll start to get used to it, begin to trust the staff, know and talk with other patients and families, and even start to get used to the diet. You'll find that life is different—but it can still be good.

What was “normal” before will start to shift to what's “normal” now. There may be times you'll feel sad and long for “the good old days” when life seemed simpler. But imagine how you'd feel if you had an illness for which there was no treatment. Even though dialysis can be difficult, it keeps you alive so you can spend time with people you love and do things you enjoy.

What *I* can do to build a new normal in my life:

- Let myself feel sad for a set time, then do at least one thing I like each day.
- Start a gratitude journal—write down at least one thing I'm thankful for at the end of each day.
- Keep a positive attitude by spending time with positive people.
- Talk with other patients who have coped well with kidney failure.
- Keep as busy as I can at home, at work, and at dialysis.

- Let friends and family know I don't want them to feel sorry for me.
- Join a support group: Call the National Kidney Foundation (800-622-9010) or the American Association of Kidney Patients (800-749-2257) to see if there is a chapter near me.
- Visit module 5 of Kidney School™: *Coping with Kidney Failure*, at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.