What does the technician do for me?

There are two or three types of technicians (techs) in a hemodialysis center:

1. In most states, a patient care tech will set up your machine, put in your needles, check on you during your treatment, and take you off when the treatment is over.

2. An equipment tech keeps the dialysis machines and water system working properly.

3. A reprocessing tech may clean dialyzers, test them, store them, and make sure they are ready for you to use again.

Your dialysis techs may have gone to a vocational program or may have had on-the-job training to learn how to care for you. Techs are supervised by nurses. In a few states, techs must take a test to be certified.

What I can do to work best with my techs:

- Ask my tech to show me how my dialysis machine works.
- Learn about my access and where my needles should go at each treatment.
- Ask my tech to teach me how to put in my own needles.
- Write down my machine settings in a notebook so I know what they are.
- Ask my tech to face my machine toward me during my treatment, so I can see it.
- Learn how my fluid goal is set and when it needs to be adjusted.
- Be respectful, but speak up if I see mistakes.
- Say “please” when I ask for something, and thank my technician for my care.
- Visit module 3 of Kidney School™: Working with Your Healthcare Team at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.