



# Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program

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How can I tell my family that I need to be more independent now?

## Q. How can I tell my family that I need to be more independent now?

**A:** As your kidneys failed, you probably felt weak and had problems doing things you needed to do. Over time, you may have asked your family and friends to help you. Now they are used to helping you and may feel good about doing it. They may not believe you are healthy enough to take on the tasks they have been helping you with. They may even think they will always have to help you.

Thank them for their help: Now that you feel stronger and healthier, start by asking your loved ones to step back and let you do things yourself. Tell them that you feel stronger now, you value their help, and you will be sure to ask them again if you need help in the future.

Talk to your social worker: Some families have a hard time not babying someone who is ill. With a chronic disease that won't go away, it is important for you to be able to set your own limits and ask for help when you need it. If you need help telling your loved ones what you need to be healthy, talk to your social worker. He or she has special training to help patients and their loved ones cope with kidney disease.

### What *I* can do to tell my family that I need to be more independent:

- Ask for help when I do need it.
- Build up my strength and follow my treatment plan so I can do more things myself.

- Ask to do things for myself as soon as I can.
- Show* my family and friends what I can do, so they can see I'm feeling better.
- Help my family and friends find other ways to feel needed besides helping me.
- Talk to my social worker to get tips for how to talk with my loved ones.
- Visit module 5 of Kidney School™: *Coping with Kidney Disease* at [www.kidneyschool.org](http://www.kidneyschool.org) to learn more about asking for help and being independent.