



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program

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www.lifeoptions.org

Q: How long can I live on dialysis?

A: When you first learned you had kidney failure, you may have thought that your life would end soon. Kidney failure can shorten your life—but there are people alive today who have been on dialysis for 30 years or more without a transplant, or with dialysis and one or more transplants.

A study of some of these long-term patients found that they believed:

- “I am still me”
- “I want to live”
- “I am still valuable”
- “I am in control”

Think about *your* life. What do you need to do to believe these statements?

Self-care and long-term survival: The long-term patients in the study learned to do parts of their treatment—and most did home dialysis. They became their own experts on how their kidney disease affected them and what they needed to do to feel their best.

There are 168 hours in a week. Most of the time, you are taking care of *yourself*—with each bite of food, glass of fluid, drug you take, and treatment you get. Keeping a positive attitude, learning all you can, and taking an active role in your care can help you feel better and live longer.

What I can do to live long and well with dialysis:

- Ask questions and learn more about my disease and its treatment.
- Learn how to do parts of my treatment, like figuring my fluid goal or learning to put in my own needles.
- Think about doing a home form of dialysis or getting a kidney transplant.
- Tell my doctor or nurse all the symptoms I have, so they can help me.
- Tell my social worker if I feel sad or blue, so I can get treatment.
- Work through all the modules of Kidney School™, at www.kidneyschool.org so I can be an active partner in my own care.
- Visit Home Dialysis Central at www.homedialysis.org to learn more about doing my own dialysis treatments at home.