



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program

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www.lifeoptions.org

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Q: Can I still do activities like hiking/boating/working out in my gym?

A: Being on dialysis should not keep you from doing most of the things you enjoyed before—even physical ones—you just may need to work up to doing those things. Regular exercise will give you more strength and energy so the things you enjoy are easier. Listen to your body. If you're tired, take a break.

Tell your doctor what activities you like to do: Ask how you can still do them. Some questions you might think about include:

- How can I protect my dialysis access?
- Do I need to do anything special to take part in water sports?
- What can help me have enough energy to do what I want to do?
- How can I build up my strength, endurance, and flexibility?

Take safety precautions while hiking and boating: As with anyone, if you are going to go hiking or boating, tell someone where you're going and when you'll be back, wear the right clothes and shoes, and take along safety supplies (water, food, rain gear, flashlight, cell phone, etc.). It's safer to go with a buddy. If you have a catheter and like boating, see if there is a waterproof dressing you could use to protect your access. Ask your doctor what you should do to avoid infection if you fall into the water.

Start slowly at the gym: Some gyms will ask you to fill out a health form or get a doctor's okay. Your doctor should be willing to give this to you. If you use weight machines, start with the lowest weight and lift it 10-12 times, then progress gradually from there. Start slowly, and keep at it to feel stronger and have more energy.

What I can do to resume my favorite activities:

- Meet with a personal trainer to help me get started on the right track with safe training.
- Read about things I can do in Life Options' booklet *Exercise: A Guide for People on Dialysis* at www.lifeoptions.org.
- Visit module 12 of Kidney School™: *Staying Active with Kidney Disease* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more about things I can do on dialysis.