

Why to Comply? Taking Steps to Better Choices

Are You Compliant?

In your dialysis world, the word compliance describes how well you follow your doctor's advice. Noncompliance is not following your doctors' advice. This includes your dialysis treatment time, medicines, doctor visits, and diet.

If you end your treatments early or refuse to take certain medications you are noncompliant with your doctor's orders.

When you do not follow the doctor's advice it is placed in your health records. Did you know that compliance is one of the key things transplant units look for in your records before placing you on a transplant list?

Being compliant is not always easy. Your dialysis center staff members are there to help with any problems that might be keeping you from staying on track. If you are having problems that are keeping you from following your doctor's orders, talk with

your social worker. No one knows how you feel or what your life involves away from the dialysis unit until you tell them.

If there are things you do not understand about your dialysis treatment ask your dialysis staff. You may try making a list of your questions so you do not forget them. Then, talk with your social worker about a time to meet to discuss your questions. During the meeting, write down the answers to your questions so you can look at them later. You must get involved in your own care, and remember there are no wrong questions.



Who Decides How Much Dialysis You Need?



One key thing you can easily be compliant with is staying on dialysis for your full prescribed treatment time.

Your kidney doctor tells the dialysis staff how much time you, as an individual, need to stay on dialysis. The time your doctor gives the unit is how much dialysis you need in order to remove waste (urea) from your blood. This time is set by looking at your monthly

lab results from blood drawn before your dialysis. If your numbers are too low your doctor may give you a longer dialysis time to help you get better. If you do not stay your full treatment the waste stays in your body and you will have a harder time leading a normal life.

When You Don't Stay the Full Treatment

When you don't get enough dialysis you may have many of the same problems you had before starting dialysis. Some of these symptoms are weakness and tiredness, not eating well, nausea, taste of ammonia in your mouth, and swelling of the heart. You have a greater chance for infections and a long bleeding time after dialysis. You may have bad cramps and low blood pressure during your

next dialysis treatment due to the need to pull off the extra fluid caused by the missed or shortened treatment.

Keep in mind, your dialysis treatment of about 4 hours 3 times a week is trying to make up for what normal kidneys do 24 hours every day for seven days. There are 168 hours in a week and dialysis is only about 12 hours a week. For you to

stay in good health you must get all of the treatment ordered by your doctor. So do the best for yourself by making your best effort to stay the entire treatment. It will be worth your time!

