



# Ask the Doctor



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- 1. Four hours is too long for me to sit in dialysis. Do I have to attend every treatment?**

Answer: Think of dialysis as being the only way to get the toxins out of your body from the food that you consume everyday - three times a day. When you lose kidney function and are on dialysis, you are usually then only cleansing your body every other day. Those toxins will build up and can cause your body to deteriorate over time.

Missing dialysis is harmful to your body. It causes toxins and water that cannot pass out to sit in your system, which jeopardizes your heart and puts you at risk for worsening complications.

It is very important that you maintain your dialysis schedule as recommended by your healthcare professionals. If you are unable to tolerate the 4 hours, talk to your doctors about possible options that might work better for you. Dialysis is important to maintaining your health.



You may want to consider home dialysis, which will allow you to cleanse your body daily.

- 2. I am 50 years old—will I be on dialysis forever?**

The only option to replace dialysis is a kidney transplant. Unless your kidney disease is reversible, then dialysis and transplantation are the only options to restore your body to better health. Dialysis cannot eliminate all the toxins,

but it is the most frequent form of kidney replacement therapy for patients with end stage renal disease.

- 3. I recently changed jobs and my insurance does not cover my transplant medications. Can I take my medicine every other day?**

Not taking your medications puts your kidney transplant at risk for rejection. You need your medications in your system at all times, as they block your immune system from attacking your kidney. When you skip doses of your medication, you leave a large amount of time for your immune system to attack the kidney. I would recommend talking with your transplant pharmacist about other options for medications that might be covered by your insurance. There may be other alternatives that your insurance will cover. This is critical.

- 4. I had a transplant a year ago. I skip lab tests often. Is it necessary to get labs consistently?**

Since you are only one year out, it is important to get labs done routinely, as rejection can occur without any symptoms. The lab work is often the first signal that your transplant is in jeopardy. When your doctor feels it is safe to increase the time interval between labs, they will do that.