



# Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

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What will happen to me if the power goes out during dialysis?

## Q: What will happen to me if the power goes out during dialysis?

**A:** Whether you are on hemodialysis or a peritoneal dialysis (PD) cyclor, you will learn how to get off dialysis safely if the power goes out. Your center will go over this and other “emergencies” with you.

On **hemodialysis**, only about 1/2 cup of your blood is in the tubing and the dialyzer (artificial kidney) at any one time. In a power failure, you or a staff member will turn the blood pump by hand to keep your blood from clotting. If the power will be off for a while, your blood will be returned to you.

If you miss a treatment time due to a power failure, you will need to be extra careful with your meals, sodium, potassium, and fluids until your next one. If you didn't get much dialysis before the power failed, you may need an extra treatment.

On **PD**, the cyclor has a backup battery that gives you time to get off dialysis if the power goes out. Since your blood is not outside your body, you don't have to worry about clotting. But you will need to call your PD nurse and ask about making up the time.

### What *I* can do to stay safe in a power outage:

- Ask my nurse or technician to show me what to do if the power fails.
- Read any handouts my center gives me on steps to take in an emergency.
- Keep a flashlight, batteries, and supplies for the emergency dialysis diet in a safe place at home, in case of a longer power outage.
- If I do home dialysis, write a letter to power and water companies telling them about my treatment, so if my power or water go off, they may fix them sooner.