



Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

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What is adequate dialysis and what does it have to do with time?

Q: What is adequate dialysis and what does it have to do with time?

A: “Adequate” dialysis removes enough fluid and wastes that you feel well and can do things you enjoy. More dialysis is more like having healthy kidneys. Dialysis is prescribed in a dose, like medicine.

Adequate Hemodialysis is tracked with one of two tests:

1. **Kt/V** (*Kay-T over V*) – a measure of the dialyzer size, time, and the amount of fluid in your body. Your Kt/V should always be *at least* 1.2.
2. **Urea reduction ratio (URR)** – a measure of how much urea (a waste that is easily measured) is in your blood before and after a treatment. Your URR should always be at least 70%.

You will feel better and live longer if you get enough dialysis. You may get less hemodialysis than you need if:

- The dialyzer is too small for you
- Your fluid goal is figured or set wrong
- Your access isn't working well
- You shorten or skip a treatment

Adequate peritoneal dialysis (PD) is tracked with one test: weekly Kt/V – a measure of how much waste is removed in a week of PD. Your weekly Kt/V should always be *at least* 2.0.

You will feel better and live longer if you get enough PD. You may get less PD than you need if:

- Your kidney function gets worse
- Your peritoneum stops clearing fluid and wastes as well as it did
- You skip exchanges or use less fluid than you should

What *I* can do to get adequate dialysis:

- Get my full treatments. *All* of them.
- Follow my fluid, sodium, and potassium limits so my treatments are more comfortable.
- Know my adequacy numbers and track them in a notebook.
- Be sure to make up any treatment time lost to alarms or bathroom trips.
- Tell the staff if “real” weight gain or loss changes my dry weight.
- Know my fluid goal for each treatment. Pay attention to how I feel.
- Learn where the fluid goal is set on the machine so I can be sure it's right.
- Tell the staff if I don't feel good on dialysis so they can fix the problem.
- Visit module 10 of Kidney School™: *Getting Adequate Dialysis* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.