



# Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program  
414 D'Onofrio Drive, Ste. 200  
Madison, WI 53719  
[www.lifeoptions.org](http://www.lifeoptions.org)

## Q: What can I do to sleep better than I do now?

**A:** Getting 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night helps your body get ready for the next day. You may find your sleep has changed since you started dialysis. Sleep changes can be due to your age, health, worries, or even bad sleep habits.

- With **hemodialysis**, you may find you sleep differently to protect your access. If you nap during treatment, it can make it hard to fall asleep at night. Nocturnal hemodialysis, which is done at night, can take some getting used to.
- With **peritoneal dialysis (PD)**, it can take time to get used to being full of fluid at night, the catheter may drain better in one position than another, and a cyclor machine might make noises that wake you up.

To sleep better, keep your bedroom dark, quiet, and cool at night. Earplugs, a sleep mask, or changing your sleepwear or bedcovers can help if you can't change the room. An eggshell cushion can help a lumpy or too-hard bed. A thin board under a mattress can fix sags.

Your body gets used to a sleep cycle. Setting up a relaxing bedtime routine and going to bed at the same time each night, even on weekends, can help. If you must nap, set an alarm for 20 minutes, then go back to your bedtime.

If your legs twitch or you get a creepy-crawly feeling in your legs at night, you may have restless legs syndrome. This problem is more common in people with kidney disease. It can be treated with hot baths, massage, and medication so you can sleep better.

### What I can do to sleep better:

- Talk to my doctor about starting an exercise program so I'm tired at night.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, or exercise within 2 hours of bedtime.
- Use my bedroom only to sleep, not to watch TV, work, or study.
- Get up and do something boring until I get tired if I can't go back to sleep in 30 minutes.
- Tell my doctor or nurse if I often have problems sleeping.
- Ask for treatment if I think I have restless legs syndrome or look up information from The RLS Foundation at [www.rls.org](http://www.rls.org).
- Visit module 12 of Kidney School™: *Staying Active with Kidney Disease* at [www.kidneyschool.org](http://www.kidneyschool.org) to learn more.
- Visit Home Dialysis Central at [www.homedialysis.org](http://www.homedialysis.org) to learn more.