



Kidney Q&A

0-3 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
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www.lifeoptions.org

Q: What does the dietitian do for me?

A: Dietitians have a bachelor's or master's degree in food and nutrition. They also know about the special needs of people with kidney disease. Your dietitian can:

- Help you learn which foods to eat more of and which ones to limit
- Share tips with you for how to follow your fluid limit
- Look at your lab tests and teach you how to adjust what you do
- Give you advice about cookbooks, recipes, and meal plans
- Tell you what nutrients are in your favorite foods, so you can work them into your meal plan
- Help you figure out what to eat at restaurants, holidays, and special events

If you have kidney disease with diabetes or another health problem, your dietitian can help you put both meal plans together and find foods you enjoy that will help you stay healthy. Your dietitian can also teach you ways to gain or lose weight if you need to.

Some dietitians are also exercise experts and can give you advice on safe exercises. If your dialysis center offers an exercise program, your dietitian may be the one to run it.

What *I* can do to work best with my dietitian:

- Tell my dietitian honestly what I eat and drink.
- Ask my dietitian to help me fit my favorite foods into my meal plan.
- Ask my dietitian to suggest cookbooks or recipes I can try.
- Track my lab tests in a notebook to keep track of how I'm doing.
- Visit module 3 of Kidney School™: *Working with Your Healthcare Team* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.