



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
414 D'Onofrio Drive, Ste. 200
Madison, WI 53719
www.lifeoptions.org

Q: How do I know if I am getting enough dialysis?

A: Your doctor will prescribe dialysis treatments that fit your needs, just as he or she would prescribe a drug. Your prescription is designed to make sure you get enough treatment to feel well and keep doing things you enjoy. To prescribe your treatment, your doctor starts with a careful look at your height and weight, lab tests, overall health, and remaining kidney function (if any).

- 1. Lab tests.** Tests called urea reduction ratio (URR) or kinetic modeling (Kt/V) are used to measure how much dialysis is prescribed and how much you are getting. Your URR should be 70% *or higher*. Your Kt/V should be 1.2 *or higher*, or 2.0 or higher for a weekly Kt/V if you use peritoneal dialysis (PD).
- 2. How you feel.** If you are getting good dialysis, you should feel good. If you are not getting enough dialysis, you may have symptoms like:
 - Weakness, fatigue, or passing out
 - Swelling in your hands, feet, or face
 - Poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, or a bad taste in your mouth
 - Yellow skin color (or darker skin color in those with dark skin)
 - Sleep problems
 - Itching

What *I* can do to get enough dialysis:

- Talk to my doctor if I think I'm not getting enough dialysis, to see if I need a prescription change.
- Know my dialysis prescription and track my URR or Kt/V. Right now, my URR is: _____% or my Kt/V is _____.
- Know my fluid limit and follow it. My fluid limit is _____ oz./day.
- Tell my care team if I eat better or exercise and gain "real" weight.
- Report symptoms that might mean I'm not getting enough treatment.
- Do all of my PD exchanges if I use PD, and use the right solution, as I was taught.
- Be on time for my treatments and stay until the end of each treatment.
- Ask my care team for help if I get restless toward the end of treatment.
- Make up time lost to machine alarms, late starts, or bathroom trips.
- Visit module 10 of Kidney School™: *Getting Adequate Dialysis* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more.