



# Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program  
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How can I understand and adjust to new roles in my family?

## Q: How can I understand and adjust to new roles in my family?

**A:** Now that you have been on dialysis for a few months, your body may be getting used to it. But you still may face the challenge of adjusting to changes in your life. You may need help to do things you used to do, or time to build up strength so you can do those things again.

**It's okay to need help sometimes:** Our culture tells us to be independent. You may not want to be "a burden" to your loved ones. But we *all* need help at times. Think about it: would you go out of your way to help your family or friends? You probably would—and they probably want to help you, too. One day you can return the favor. You may not always need help.

**Goal-setting:** Setting goals and working toward them can help you feel better about changing your role in your family. For example, think about trading active chores (like mowing the lawn) for sitting chores (like paying bills) and starting an exercise program to get strong enough to take your jobs back.

### What I can do to cope with changing roles in my family:

- Know and accept my strengths and limitations.
- Ask for help when I need it.
- Think about ways I can help others when I need help.

Talk to a family member, friend, clergy, or my renal social worker.

Set goals and work toward getting stronger, one step at a time, so I can do more for myself. My first step is:

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Make an appointment to talk with my social worker for help adapting to my new roles.

Consider doing a home form of dialysis that will give you more energy, fewer diet limits, and more control of your schedule. Learn more at [www.homedialysis.org](http://www.homedialysis.org).

Visit module 5 of Kidney School™: *Coping with Kidney Disease* at [www.kidneyschool.org](http://www.kidneyschool.org) to learn more about asking for help.