



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
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Q: What does dialysis adequacy have to do with how I eat?

A: Dialysis replaces only part of normal kidney function. So, you need to help dialysis work by limiting fluids and certain foods. Following your fluid limits and meal plan is something you can do to help ensure adequate—or better—dialysis.

“Adequate” dialysis is the *least* amount of dialysis you need to feel your best. More dialysis is better. The numbers to beat are:

- A URR of 65% or higher or a Kt/V of 1.2 or higher for hemodialysis (HD)
- A weekly Kt/V of 2.0 for peritoneal dialysis (PD)

Good dialysis makes you feel better, so you can eat well. Having a lot of waste in your blood reduces your appetite and changes how foods smell and taste. Good dialysis removes more waste so you feel better and can eat more.

Good nutrition improves survival. Research has shown that good nutrition and good treatment increase survival on dialysis. If you eat well and get good dialysis, you can reduce your chances of needing to go to the hospital, and have a better chance of living longer.

Your lab tests will help you see how good your nutrition and dialysis are. Your serum albumin level should be higher than 3.5 g/dL for PD, and greater than 3.7 g/dL for HD.

If your clinic has different goals, they should be your guidelines.

What *I* can do with my diet and dialysis to stay healthy:

- Get every minute of dialysis my doctor prescribes, and ask about more treatment if my dialysis isn't making me feel better.
- Learn how to read my lab test reports for adequacy and nutrition. My URR or Kt/V is _____. My serum albumin level is _____.
- Follow my meal plan and fluid limit.
- Get *Just the Facts: Hemodialysis Adequacy* from Life Options at (800) 468-7777 or www.lifeoptions.org.
- Visit module 9 of Kidney School™: *Nutrition and Fluids* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more about how my eating affects my health.
- Visit module 10 of Kidney School™: *Getting Adequate Dialysis* to learn more about good dialysis.