



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program
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www.lifeoptions.org

Q: What are the long-term effects of my medical condition?

A: As our bodies age, we all may have aches and pains and new health problems. When you have kidney failure, dialysis can't replace all of the functions your kidneys did. Even with the best care, some problems can arise—but you can avoid many of them if you follow your treatment plan and take good care of yourself.

Here are some possible long-term problems:

- Weak bones (renal bone disease), bone or joint pain
- Calcium crystals in your tissues and blood (vascular calcification)
- Protein in your tissues (amyloidosis)
- Numbness in your hands or feet (neuropathy)
- Enlarged heart
- High blood pressure

What I can do to avoid complications:

- Take my binders and keep my calcium, phosphorus, and parathyroid hormone (PTH) lab tests in the target range to avoid bone disease.
- Ask my doctor if a non-calcium binder might be a good choice for me to avoid calcium crystals or build-up in my blood vessels.

- Follow my meal plan, fluid limits, and dialysis treatment schedule to help avoid amyloidosis, neuropathy, and heart problems.
- Keep my blood sugar under control if I have diabetes, to help avoid neuropathy and other complications.
- Make sure that I get all the EPO my doctor prescribes, to give me more energy and protect my heart. My EPO dose is _____.
- Take all of the drugs my doctor prescribes and report any symptoms.
- Work up to 30 minutes of exercise each day (start with 5 minutes a day).
- Think about doing home dialysis. You can learn more at Home Dialysis Central at www.homedialysis.org.
- Visit module 4 of Kidney School™: *Following Your Treatment Plan* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more about how to track my treatment.
- Visit module 13 of Kidney School™: *Heart Health and Blood Pressure* to learn how to stay heart-healthy and protect my blood vessels. www.kidneyschool.org
- Visit module 16 of Kidney School™: *Long-term Effects of Kidney Disease* to learn how to stay healthy for the long haul. www.kidneyschool.org