



# Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

Life Options Rehabilitation Program  
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## Q: Will I ever stop having a lot of ups and downs in the way I feel?

**A:** It would be nice to say that one day in the future, you will have all up days and no down days, but that would not be true. You had up and down days before you had kidney failure, too. The real question is, how can you have more good days and fewer bad ones?

**Selective memory:** When people look at the past, they often recall mostly good days. But in reality, those days weren't all good. You had a bad day now and then. What led you to have a bad day then may seem silly to you now, but being alive means having some level of stress—from one cause or another.

**Reduce your stress level:** You can't choose what happens to you, *but you can choose how you react to it*. Feeling in control can help you reduce stress that comes from the unknown.

**Feel your best:** Your physical health affects your emotional ups and downs. The better your body feels, the more good days you will have.

**What I can do to keep from having so many highs and lows:**

- Recognize the life events that cause me stress.
- Ask for help when my stress level starts rising, before it gets to the point that I can't handle it.

- Arm myself with knowledge instead of worrying about what will happen.
- Talk to people on dialysis who are doing well, and learn their secrets.
- Follow my meal plan and fluid limits, start an exercise program with my doctor's okay, and get all the dialysis I am prescribed so I can feel my best physically.
- Take good care of my access to help me stay out of the hospital.
- Get *Just the Facts: Depression* from Life Options at [www.lifeoptions.org](http://www.lifeoptions.org).
- Visit module 5 of Kidney School™: *Coping with Kidney Disease* at [www.kidneyschool.org](http://www.kidneyschool.org) to learn more about what I can do to cope with kidney disease.